



R Woodman sc

Rich Hill

For a picture on the register of S. Howard M.D. M.P. M.B.

THE LIFE
OF
SIR RICHARD HILL, BART.

M. P. FOR THE COUNTY OF SHROPSHIRE.

BY

THE REV. EDWIN SIDNEY, A.M.

AUTHOR OF THE LIFE OF HIS BROTHER, THE REV. ROWLAND HILL, A.M.

AND THAT OF THE REV. SAMUEL WALKER, OF TRURO, &c. &c.

"A better man I do not know within the circle of human nature."—*Lord Chief Justice Kenyon of Sir Richard Hill.*

"He was of a large and great soul, comprehensive of the interests of God, the world, the Church, his country, his friends, and (with a peculiar concernedness) of the souls of men, ready to his uttermost to serve them all; made up of compassion towards the distressed, of delight in the good, and general benignity towards all men."—*Howe.*

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TO
SIR ROWLAND HILL, BART. M.P.

THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED,

AS A TESTIMONY OF GRATITUDE

FOR THE

CONFIDENTIAL USE OF VARIOUS PAPERS AND MANUSCRIPTS,

VERY KINDLY ENTRUSTED TO HIS DISCRETION,

AND AS A MARK

OF THE

MOST SINCERE ESTEEM AND REGARD

OF

THE AUTHOR.

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LIFE, &c.

CHAPTER I.

CONNEXION OF SIR RICHARD HILL WITH THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL
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HIS OWN ACCOUNT OF HIS EARLY SERIOUS IMPRESSIONS AND
EXPERIENCE.

RICHARD, THE NAME OF THE GREAT HILL.

THE present diffusion of religious light and zeal over almost every part of this country, is unquestionably attributable to the energy of the once despised, but now honored revivalists of the last century, amongst whom, no layman of birth and fortune, was more zealous than Sir Richard Hill. He was the eldest son of Sir Rowland Hill, the first baronet of this distinguished and ancient family; and was called Richard, after his celebrated ancestor, styled the Great Hill, to whom they are indebted for the title and the house at Hawkstone. Not only was he the namesake of this illustrious man, but he was possessed of many of his exemplary qualities, particularly that of rigid adherence to the path of conscientious duty, whence the words

inscribed on the tomb of this excellent member of his family, might have been justly engraved upon his own :

Vixi, et quem dederat cursum Deus ipse, peregi.

I have already, in my Life of Sir Richard's venerable brother, Mr. Rowland Hill, given a sufficient account of his honorable descent, and therefore need not repeat it here. These two remarkable men were devoted to the gospel ; and however questionable some of their proceedings may have been, none of their pious contemporaries made a more willing sacrifice than they did, of ease, reputation, and interest, to the cause they espoused. During the early part of their career, Sir Richard Hill was not less known than his brother Rowland ; and attracted as much attention by his theological pamphlets, as the latter did by his unrivalled exertions as a preacher. His history, too, is intimately connected with almost every subject of religious interest, during the important days in which he appeared as the champion of evangelical doctrine, and the patron of its ministers. There was great variety in his pursuits, arising out of the events of his times, his situation, and his duties as a country gentleman ; but the Christian was visible in them all. His political relations also as the representative of a large county, and his intimacy with many of the statesmen of his day, combined with his well known religious bias, gave an uncommon interest to what he wrote and said, which was not a little augmented by constitutional peculiarity of thought and manner of expression. It is my design, however, to pass by all topics of a merely local or party nature, which could be neither interesting nor beneficial to the general reader, and to pursue only the main stream of that public course, which has entitled him to be looked

upon as a promoter of the truest welfare of his country. I shall also interweave with his personal narrative, much that will throw light on the remarkable steps by which we have progressively reached the unparalleled state of religious zeal and knowledge, which distinguishes us as a nation in these energetic, but too divided times.

Sir Richard Hill was the first offspring of the marriage of his father Sir Rowland Hill with Jane, daughter of Sir Brian Broughton, of Broughton, Baronet, by whom he had ten children. He was born on the sixth day of June, 1732, at Hawkstone, where his name will be long remembered with pleasure, not only for the unique embellishments he added to its romantic scenes, but for the benefits he conferred upon those over whom his influence extended. Nature has lavished her choicest beauties on that lovely spot; and no where can we find an equal variety of all that gives interest to the landscape, within the limited compass of a single park. It is never traversed without surprise and admiration; but it has the still higher attraction of having been the home of the pious and the brave.

“ Though I felt yesterday,” says a popular tourist,¹ writing from Hawkstone, “ perfectly *blasé* of parks, and thought I could never take any interest in them again, I am quite of another mind to-day, and must in some respects give Hawkstone the preference over all I have seen. It is not art, nor magnificence, nor aristocratical splendour, but nature alone, to which it is indebted for this pre-eminence; and in such a degree, that, were I gifted with the power of adding to its beauties, I should ask, What can I add?” So commanding is the situation of this enchanting ground, that from the lofty

¹ Tour of a German Prince.

column erected to the memory of a distinguished ancestor of the Hills, the first Protestant Lord Mayor of London, the eye can wander at pleasure over fifteen counties, or rest upon the curious rocks and woods mingled with the richest pasturage, immediately beneath it. "Three sides of this wide panorama rise and fall in a constant change of hill and dale, like the waves of an agitated sea, and are bounded at the horizon by the strangely formed jagged outline of the Welsh mountains, which at either end descend to a fertile plain, shaded by thousands of lofty trees, till, in the obscure distance, it blends with a white misty line—the ocean." From the height before mentioned, the spectator looks down upon fantastic groves of trees mingled with the boldest rocks, which seem to have been thrown up at intervals, by some vast effort, from the bowels of the earth. Between these, grassy valleys form the most luxuriant meadow land, harmonizing beyond all expression with the gigantic masses of grey stone, streaked with pale coppery green, which tower majestically all around. Out of a hanging wood of venerable beech trees crowned by a thicket of black firs,¹ rises the celebrated "Grotto Rock," on whose caverns Sir Richard Hill expended much of his ingenuity. Its summit is reached by a long winding path in the steep wood, which conducts to the door of a dark passage in the rock, and he who has courage to grope his way for nearly a hundred yards in perfect darkness, through this narrow entrance, is suddenly rewarded by finding himself in a vaulted chamber incrustated with shells and minerals, sparkling in a thousand hues, shed on them, through coloured lights placed in the fissures of the rock above. The interior of this grotto spangled

¹ I regret to say that many of these noble trees were blown down by the severe gale at the beginning of this year.

over with chrystals and imitative jewellery, seems almost a realization of the cave of precious stones described in the pages of Oriental fiction. At no great distance from this strange and illusive cavern, stands a fantastic summer-house called the " Temple of Patience," where visitors have to wait for the guide who is to conduct them to the " Swiss Bridge," which is thrown over a dizzy chasm, and trembles as it is crossed to a dark rock, twined about with branches of old trees and festoons of ivy, giving it the look of an ancient fortress impervious to the shocks of time, and bidding defiance to the elements. It is called " Reynard's House," having been the abode of a fox, who is said to have found a secure retreat in this castle of nature. Upon the same level, and not far off, the smooth verdure of the " Terrace " invites to a gentler walk, after the fatigues encountered in climbing the steeps which lead to it ; and here the eye may range across a vast expanse of country, strikingly varied in its features and rich in cultivation. Descending from this verdant spot, and passing the " Menagerie," the " Green House," and other curious adornments of the place, the next object reached, after traversing a region as singular as any before mentioned, is the sublimely situated ruin called the " Red Castle." This extraordinary place is thus described by the traveller, whose notice of Hawkstone has been before alluded to. " The decayed walls and the hewn rocky sides are of great extent. You can reach the interior only through a winding passage blasted in the rock. Out of this tunnel you emerge into a picturesque alley of rock with smooth high walls, over-arched with mountain ashes. On the side you perceive a cavern, the mouth of which is still closed with a rusty iron gate. Climbing rude steps in

the rock, you reach the upper part of the ruin—a high roofless tower, in whose walls, fifteen feet thick, many trees, centuries old, have struck their roots, and in the interior of which is a well, which appears to sink down to the entrails of the earth. The massy and unshaken barrier around it, the lofty tower, through which the sky appears above, and the bottomless depth beneath, where reigns eternal night, produce an effect I never remember to have experienced. You see Hope and Despair allegorically united in one picture before you. The tower and the rock on which it stands, look down from a giddy height, in a perfectly perpendicular line, upon the valley, in which the huge trees appear like copse-wood.”

This extraordinary ruin is not without its curious traditionary legends of the deeds of the fabulous knights of the castle. Two of these are called Sir Edward and Sir Hue, its supposed masters in the days of King Arthur and the knights of the round table. They were far from being gallant in their bearing towards the Lady of the Rock, who is reported to have had her dwelling on the lofty and romantic cliff which now goes by the name of the “ Ravens’ Shelf,” one of the wildest spots in Hawkestone Park. Notwithstanding she was “ a full curteous lady,” these perilous brethren disinherited her of a barony of lands by their extortion, upon which she made complaint of them to one Sir Ewaine, who after a tournament in Wales where he smote down thirty knights, had come to her residence with his prizes, a jer falcon and white steed wrapped with cloth of gold, and accompanied by his “ damosell ” of threescore winters of age, with whom he had gone through many strange adventures. “ Madam,” said her doughty guest, “ they are to blame.” He offered also first to entreat them

with fairness as a knight of King Arthur ; but if this availed not, he was ready to " doe battaile with them" in defence of her right. " Gramarcie," said the Lady of the Rock. On the morrow they were summoned to speak with her ; and " wit it well they failed not, for they came with a hundred horses," and vowed to Sir Ewaine, who spoke to them out of the lady's tower, that they would keep what they had. Upon this the brave knight offered to fight one or both of them ; and it was agreed at length, that if he won them both " in plain bataille," the lady should have her lands again. The knights of the red castle departed and made themselves ready, and Sir Ewaine the same evening had " great cheere." The next day he fought both the foes of his hostess for five hours, who " wounded him passing sore that the lady of the Roche wend that he would have died." At length he " smote Sir Edward upon the helm, such a buffet, that his sword karved him unto his collar bone, and then Sir Hue abated his courage," and at length yielded unto Sir Ewaine, who of his gentleness received his sword and took him by the hand, and they went into the castle together. The lady of the Rock was " passing glad, and Sir Hue made great mone for his brother's death." Moreover the lady was restored unto her lands, and nursed her deliverer till he was " whole of his great hurts." ¹

Also in the days of King Authur, two giants are said to have possessed the castle, whose names were Tarquin and Tarquinus ; and from this tradition it is, that the donjon is called the " Giant's Well." Bishop Heber, when rector of Hodnet, loved to wander among the rocks and groves of Hawkstone, and collected tales

¹ I am indebted for these legends to the kindness of Miss Jane Hill, the talented sister of Lord Hill.

of the deeds of those heroes, from a worthy couple inhabiting the "Hermitage Farm," who had many of these stories to tell. They used to shew him where the tree stood, on which was suspended the "bason of copper," by striking which, a challenge was given to the bold tenants of the Red Castle, and whereon many a daring knight had tolled his own death-knell. Three strokes of a spear would bring a giant down, as portentous in appearance, as Gawen, sister's son to Arthur, whose body is said to have been found *fourteen feet in length*, in 1087 ; and if he who made the bason ring to his weapon was spared, it was only to linger out his life in the dungeon of the Giant's well, at a depth of two hundred and six feet below the top of the tower. Mr. Reginald Heber delighted in the romance of these places, and would indulge his imagination, as the old tenants of the "Hermitage" pointed out to him the bank on which the damsel sat to view the conflict between Sir Tarquin, and Sir Launcelot, who

"——sought proud Tarquin in his den,¹
And freed full sixty knights."

Nor did he gaze without interest on the brook which the legends say was saturated with gore, for three days and three nights after the awful encounter. Before this battle, Sir Launcelot led by his damsel to the tree of the bason, beat its bottom out ; and in the battle with "Sir Tarquine," they "hurtled together like two wild bulls, rushing and lashing with shields and swords, that sometimes they fell both on their noses." At length Sir Launcelot "lept upon him as fiercely as a lion," and plucked him down by the knees, and then "smote his

¹ Marmion.

neck asunder." Upon this, at the command of the "damsel" who was with him, he sent and delivered all the prisoners in the castle, for he had slain the giant "worshipfully with his own hands."

Such are some of the legends of the celebrated tenants of the Red Castle, which was, according to authentic records, the ancient seat of the Audleys. The first of this family had a special licence to build a castle on this spot in the reign of Henry III.; but many persons are of opinion that this famous rock was fortified long prior to this period, and that the lower part of the donjon is of great antiquity. The celebrated James, Lord Audley,¹ was Lord of this fortress, and probably resided there occasionally; and his four valiant squires lived at no great distance from the spot. In the year 1756, the purchase of this picturesque portion of the domain of Hawkstone was completed by Sir Rowland Hill; and it has since formed one of the wonders of the park. It is now one of the most attractive ruins in England; and it is impossible to climb the rugged ascent to its summit, without many a pensive thought of days of vain chivalry long past away—of the watch lights that gleamed from its towers, the banquet spread in its halls, the long hushed voice of its minstrels, the splendour of its tournaments, and the groans and miseries of the captives in the deep and dreary donjon. The imagination brings before the mind a vivid conception of these scenes of past ages, when ignorance and barbarism went hand in hand with revelry and savage battles, and brutal revenge. But the interest of this

¹ He was distinguished by his achievements in the battle of Poitiers, and is much commended in Froissart's Chronicles, as are also his squires, three of whose names are said to have been Mackworth, Delves, and Hawkstone.

wonder of nature and proud remnant of the olden days, is increased tenfold by the fact, that the greatest and bravest, as well as the most peace-loving of heroes, who saved his country, and under Providence dispelled the cloud gathered round every throne in Europe, traces his lineage from the warriors of the Black Prince, who owned the Red Castle of Hawkstone. The Duke of Wellington is descended from Ralph, Earl of Stafford, and his wife, Lady Margaret de Audley. This Earl lived in the reign of Edward III. : he was possessed of the highest talents both civil and military, and served his sovereign and his country in both these capacities at the same time, with the most distinguished honour and success. It is also a singular fact, that Lord Hill, to whose family this castle belongs, had, during the late eventful war, three officers¹ on his staff, who are allied to the families of the brave squires of Lord Audley. And the name of Hawkstone, which was that of one of these ancient warriors, connects the history of the heroes of the family of Hill, with the valorous men who fought under the banners of the renowned Black Prince. Near the door-way of the keep, the random blow of a workman's pick-axe disclosed to Sir Richard Hill some half century ago, a mouldering coffin, containing bones and the iron head of a barbed weapon, probably the remains of some captive murdered in the walls of the fortress, and secreted in this place. This was the last remnant of the many human beings who fought, or revelled, or groaned upon this red rock, whose history, both fabu-

¹ Colonel Mackworth, Colonel Egerton, the esteemed aid de camp of Lord Hill at the present time, and General Clement Hill, who is related to the family of Delves. It is impossible to mention three men of more estimable qualities, or more beloved by all who know them.

lous, and authentic, is as curious as that of any similar ruin in this ancient isle of castles and of chivalry.

The "German Prince" is not the only popular writer who has recorded the impressions produced on the imagination by the wonders of Hawkstone. Dr. Johnson who was there in 1774, describes it as "a region abounding with striking scenes and terrific grandeur." He declares that it excels Dovedale—though it certainly has no river like the rippling Dove—"by the extent of its prospects, the awfulness of its shades, the horror of its precipices, the verdure of its hollows, and the loftiness of its rocks." "The ideas," he adds, "which it forces upon the mind, are the sublime, the dreadful, and the vast; above is inaccessible altitude, below is horrible profundity." So struck was he with all he saw amidst these precipices and caverns, that he called his "walk an adventure, and his departure an escape." To crown all, he said, "Hawkstone should be described by Milton." When this eminent man explored the scenery of Hawkstone, "art had proceeded no farther than to make the succession of wonders safely accessible." But in after times, Sir Richard Hill placed in almost every spot, some device he thought appropriate to the romance of the situation. He multiplied inscriptions also, and set up tablets in various places. In the "Tower Glen," he placed an urn to the memory of an ancestor, a zealous royalist, who was concealed in its fastnesses, while his house was pillaged and ransacked, in the days of Charles I. He was at length discovered, and imprisoned in the Red Castle, which was soon afterwards reduced to its present imposing state of ruin. Whatever may be the various opinions of the ingenuity displayed by Sir Richard Hill in his diversified erections, all concur in admiring his taste in the choice of their situations,

and the way in which he opened the extraordinary scenes they respectively present to those who have climbed the heights, or descended to the glens in which they are severally placed. Indeed, such is the variety of this unique demesne, that almost every member of the family claims the credit of having discovered some fresh view of its beauties.

One portion of this concentration of wonders remains however yet to be described. Passing through a rich valley, in which rises a curious "deformity,"¹ with the Red Castle on the right, and the majestic Grotto Rock upon the left, there presents itself a castellated house, in the form of the family crest, thence appropriately called, the "Citadel." It is now the residence of the mother of the present baronet, the niece of the well known and philanthropic Lord Teignmouth, late President of the noblest of all institutions, the British and Foreign Bible Society. On the left of this tasteful building there is an open plain of the richest meadow land, which is traversed without any expectation of the surprise in store. But soon, a peep down a lovely valley indicates that there is something yet unseen. Presently, a wood is reached, surrounded by a high embankment covered with copse, and leading over a series of curious mounds, the ancient enclosures of a Roman station, considered by all antiquarians, one of the finest in our island.² It is celebrated by Camden in his *Britannia*;—and it is in

¹ Called "Nature's Deformity" from its resemblance to a curvature of the spine.

² Called the "Burg Walls," from "Burgh." Well-informed antiquarians consider this to be the site of the disputed Rutunium. Whether it is or not, it is certainly that of a Roman station of importance, as is proved by the coins and bricks found about the place.

all respects, a spot of unrivalled interest and beauty. Treading on the ancient bulwarks thrown up by the conquerors of the world, and looking thence upon a very fairy land of beauty, the admirer of nature and of art seems lost as in a dream. At his feet lie the remnants of Roman power and glory, bringing to the memory its stores of the history of conquests achieved in ages long past away ; before him there expands a landscape of indescribable loveliness and grandeur. In the foreground, a sloping wood of the noblest trees is spread over the bosom of a majestic hill fronting the knoll whereon he stands, the side of which is also covered with trees of equal growth, over whose tops he looks down into a valley forming a vista that terminates in a range of mountains ; and among them stands the old Wrekin, the boast from time immemorial, of every true Salopian. Such is Hawkstone, the birth place of the brothers Richard and Rowland Hill, whose names will never be omitted in the annals of the eventful æra of religious revival in the last century. From many a point also in this home of true patriotism, may be seen the lofty column erected to the honor of Lord Hill, near the chief town of his native county, by friends, who while they admired his valour, knew how to appreciate his private virtues and urbanity. The mansion¹ is now rendered worthy of its noble situation, and is surrounded by a tenantry made happy by those considerations of responsibility and duty on the part of its possessors, without which, wealth and splendour are but the melancholy trappings of miserable selfishness. To his perpetual honour, Sir Richard Hill composed and erected upon the face of a lofty rock called the " Retreat," the following lines :—

¹ It has been improved and enlarged in excellent taste by the present Sir Rowland Hill.

Whilst all thy glories, O my God,
Through the creation shine,
Whilst rocks, and hills, and fertile vales
Proclaim the hand divine,

O, may I view with humble heart
The wonders of thy power,
Display'd alike in wilder scenes,
As in each blade and flower.

But whilst I-taste thy blessings, Lord,
And sip the streams below,
O, may my soul be led to Thee,
From whom all blessings flow.

And if such footsteps of thy love
Through this lost world we trace,
How far transcendant are thy works
Throughout thy world of grace.

Just as before yon noon-tide sun
The brightest stars are small,
So earthly comforts are but snares
Till grace has crowned them all.

Such were the feelings of this excellent owner of Hawkstone; and they are cordially responded to by those who have now succeeded him in his earthly possessions.

Amidst these scenes, of which this brief description is far from being adequate to the reality, the young Richard Hill passed the first days of his childhood. He was gifted with a natural quickness and vivacity of mind: and in his earliest youth was susceptible of deep impressions. While yet a child, he was moved to serious thoughts of religion, which happily did not prove transient emotions, but ripened as he grew up into life. I possess in his hand-

writing, a most remarkable narrative of his early experience, and am thus enabled to make him describe his own conversion for himself. This account is contained in a letter, written while still a young man, to a clergyman who desired to become acquainted with the progress of religion in his youthful mind. Like his brother Rowland, of whose conversion he was made the instrument, Sir Richard Hill was designed for extraordinary purposes in peculiar times. The awakenings of such men, have, in frequent instances, been as much out of the usual course, as the events of their subsequent lives have differed from the more even tenor of believers in general. The fire of conviction seems in these cases to have been made doubly strong, that the heart might be melted to receive such a deep impress of the heavenly seal, as no collision with the world could have power to impair. Sir Richard Hill, though firm in his views of the gospel, was by no means given to enthusiasm, and therefore his early history is more worthy of attention, as being a deliberate communication of the intense mental struggles through which he passed, as in a furnace that purified his inner man. After a short explanatory introduction, which I have omitted, as well as some other parts, either of too private a nature for the public eye, or not essential to the history, the narrative proceeds as follows :—

“ It would not be an easy matter for me to ascertain the time when the first dawnings of divine light began to break in upon my soul ; but I remember particularly that when I was about eight or nine years of age, being then at a neighbouring school, and repeating the Catechism one Sunday evening, with some other boys, to the master, I found my heart sweetly drawn up to heavenly

objects, and had such a taste of the love of God, as made every thing else appear insipid and contemptible. But this was but a transitory glimpse of the heavenly gift ; and I was no sooner withdrawn with the rest of my schoolfellows, than my religious impressions vanished, and I returned to folly with the same eagerness as before. But God did not leave me to myself ; I had frequent checks of conscience, and the thoughts of death sometimes came forcibly into my mind. I remained about two years at the school before mentioned, after which I was removed to Westminster, where my convictions still pursued me, and forced me to several superficial repentances and resolutions ; but these being all made in my own strength, soon came to nothing, though I could never lay them aside without first endeavouring to pacify conscience with Felix's opium, 'At a more convenient season I will hear thee.' But neither would this succeed ; for though I would willingly have promised myself years to come, yet the reflection of the uncertainty even of another hour, was often in my mind.

" I saw, that young as I was, younger than I were daily called away ; that I was not too young to rebel against God, and consequently not too young, if I died in my rebellion, to be punished with everlasting destruction from his presence.

" But these persuasive motions, if I may so call them, of the good Spirit of God, were not sufficient to overrule the obstinacy of my nature, and my love of sin. I had need, as the sequel will shew, to be dealt with by far more violent methods. When I had been about four or five years at Westminster, I was to be confirmed with several more of my schoolfellows. I looked upon this as going into a new state, and therefore made the most solemn resolutions of becoming a new creature.

But alas, my happiness and conversion were far from beginning here, as I had fondly imagined. The adversary, now finding that he was not likely to make me continue any longer in a state of practical wickedness by his former stratagems, began to attack me on another side, viz. by suggesting horrible doubts concerning the very fundamentals of all religions,—as the being of a God,—the immortality of the soul, and the divine origin of the Scriptures. I endeavoured to reason myself into the belief of these truths, but all in vain. However, I thought I might easily get some book that should convince me of their certainty. Accordingly, I borrowed Dr. Beveridge's *Private Thoughts*, of a clergyman's widow with whom I boarded, she having first read to me a few pages in that excellent work. It was, to the best of my remembrance, whilst she was reading, that such glorious, instantaneous light and comfort were diffused over my soul, as no tongue can express; the love of God was shed abroad in my heart, and I rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. However, these comforts, I think, did not last above half an hour at most, but went off by degrees, when the same doubts succeeded; upon which, I had again recourse to Bishop Beveridge's *Thoughts*, or to conversation on the subject of religion; and for several times as I did this, I experienced the same manifestations of divine love, which were sometimes of longer, sometimes of shorter duration, but never I think, lasted above an hour or two. I remember one night in particular, that I laid me down to rest, cherished with God's comforts, and fully persuaded of every truth of religion, but woke in the morning an unhappy sceptic. Once, if not oftener, this heavenly light transfused itself over my heart, when I was neither reading nor praying, and it was so remark-

able, that I remember the time and place as well as if it was but this moment.

“ In this manner I went on, I believe three or four months at least ; sometimes doubting of all things, at others, fully persuaded of every truth of Christianity. There was no medium. I was either Atheist or Christian. During this time, I read many books in vindication of the Christian religion, continued in constant prayer for faith, and abstained from outward sin. But whenever I went on my knees, the following suggestions came into my mind,—“ How do I know there is any God to hear me ? Suppose religion should be all cheat and priestcraft ; and if so, what avail my prayers ? ” At length, I began to be tired of this state of uncertainty, especially as the comforts I had before felt, began to be few and faint. Add to this, the bad example of my schoolfellows, and the despair I began to be in of obtaining satisfaction of the truth of what is called natural, as well as revealed religion, contributed not a little to make me lay aside my inquiries, and to fall into many sins that youth and strong passions prompted me to ; and this I did with the more eagerness, as I was desirous of laying hold of every opportunity of turning my thoughts from within myself.

“ I believe I might now be about eighteen years of age, when having gone through the school at Westminster, I was entered at Magdalen College, Oxford, where I continued between four and five years. After which, I went abroad for about two years more,¹ returning to

¹ Sir Richard Hill left a part of his journal of this tour among his papers ; but as it is chiefly devoted to the history, forms of government, and religion of the various places he visited, which are known to the world, I would not impair the effect of this valuable portion of his narrative by extracts from it.

England in 1757, being then about the age of twenty-three or twenty-four. During my residence at Oxford, and in foreign parts, notwithstanding all the wretched pains I took to lull conscience asleep, still my convictions pursued me ; yea, the more I endeavoured to put from me the thoughts of my soul by drinking deeper draughts of iniquity, the more strongly did the insulted Spirit plead with me, and often in the very act of sin, would so embitter my carnal gratifications and strike me with such deep remorse, that,—Oh ! horrid to think ! —I have even been ready to murmur, because God would not let me alone, nor suffer me to sin with the same relentless satisfaction which I observed in my companions. Whilst I was abroad, though I kept my sins, I would gladly have left my convictions with my native country ; but I experienced the truth of what a heathen poet says in another sense :—

“Cœlum, non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt.”

“But He that *hath loved me with an everlasting love*, had all this while thoughts of mercy towards me, and would not take his loving kindness utterly away from me. He therefore *waited that he might be gracious* unto me, and followed me with such loud and constant convictions as often brought me upon my knees, and sometimes forced me to break off my sins for a month, or a quarter of a year together ; for, though I still remained full of doubts as to the truth of religion, yet I thought that if there was a God and a future state, and that if Jesus Christ was indeed the true Messiah and the author of eternal salvation to those who obey him, that I could by no means be saved in the state I was in ; and that, being uncertain whether these things were so or not, it was the highest infatuation to leave the eternal happiness or misery of

my soul at a peradventure, especially as I could be no loser by admitting the truths of religion, and living under their influence ; whereas, were I to continue in sin under the supposition of their being false, I might find myself fatally mistaken when it would be too late to recant or retrieve my error. But, notwithstanding I came to this conclusion and plainly saw its reasonableness, yet were my religious fits of no long continuance, but every temptation that offered itself hurried me impetuously away, and I became seven times more the child of hell than before. Nevertheless, every new fall increased my anguish of spirit, and set me upon praying and resolving ; insomuch that I frequently bound myself under the most solemn imprecations. Add to this, conscience would sometimes strike me in the midst of my career—‘Remember, wretch, if thou perishest it is not through ignorance or lack of warning, but through thy own wilful obstinacy, which refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer. Remember that he who knows his master’s will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.’

“ But alas ! alas ! I was all this while as ignorant of my own weakness, as of Him on whom my strength was laid ; and therefore no wonder all my attempts to make myself holy, were attended with no better success than if I had tried to wash the Ethiopian white, and answered no other end than to distress my soul a thousand times more than if I had never made such solemn vows ; for all this while I had no other notion of religion, than that it consisted in something which I was to do *in order to make God amends* for my past sins, and to please him for the time to come, in consideration of which I should escape hell and be entitled to everlasting life.

“ In this manner I went on vowing and breaking my vows, sinning and repenting, till my most merciful God

and Saviour, seeing that all his gracious calls would not overrule the horrible perverseness of my will, instead of giving me up, as in just judgment he might have done, or pronounced against me that dreadful sentence, "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?"—I say, instead of this, he began to deal with me after a far more violent method than he had hitherto done, filling my soul with the most unimaginable terrors, insomuch that *I roared for the very disquietness of my heart. The arrows of the Almighty stuck fast in me, the poison whereof drank up my spirits, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me.*

"I now needed not to be assured of the existence of a God, for I felt his fierce wrath upon my conscience, and all his storms went over me; yea, I saw, as it were, his uplifted arm and terrible countenance ready to hurl me into the bottomless pit, and grind me to powder.

"From this time, which was about October, 1757, I may say that sin received its mortal blow, (I mean its reigning power, for God knows the body of sin yet is far from being done away), and I set myself to work with all the earnestness of a poor perishing mariner, who is every moment in expectation of shipwreck. I fasted, prayed, and meditated; I read the Scriptures, communicated, and gave much alms. But these things could bring no peace to my soul; on the contrary, I now saw, what I never had seen before, that all my works were mixed with sin and imperfection. Besides this, Satan furiously assaulted me with suggestions that I had committed the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost, and had let my day of grace slip; that therefore my prayers were cast out of God, and were an abomination to him, and that it was too late to think of mercy when it was the time of judgment. Particularly that passage, Heb. vi., 4—6, stood against me like a brazen wall.

I recollected the sweet dawnings of grace and love which I had experienced when at school, from which I concluded that I had certainly been once enlightened, and had tasted of the heavenly gift, and of the powers of the world to come, and that I was so far fallen away that it was impossible to renew me again unto repentance. Now was the case of Esau, who found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears, particularly terrifying to me, and every threatening of Scripture seemed levelled at me at once. You will readily conclude that under these burdens my terrors still increased, insomuch that I could neither eat nor sleep, and did not think it possible for me to live a week. Everybody observed how ill I looked, and I had much ado to conceal the straits I was in from all about me. In this dreadful case Satan tempted me to blaspheme God, and to put an end to my miserable life, suggesting to me that I could not be absolutely sure that there was a future state, though I so much dreaded it.

“After having suffered in this manner a short time, I made my case known to a clergyman, in hopes of finding some relief; but all he said to me, which indeed was not much to the purpose, had little or no effect; nor was I much easier from reading the most comfortable Scripture promises, because as I well knew I had slighted, so I thought I had forfeited them all, and that therefore *nothing now remained for me but a certain fearful expectation and looking for of judgment.*

“It is beyond the power of conception, much more of expression, to form an idea of the dreadful agonies my poor soul was now in. What to do, or to whom to have recourse, I knew not; for, alas, I had no acquaintance with anybody who seemed to have the least experience in such cases. However, those about me shewed the great-

est concern for my situation, and offered their remedies for my relief, such as company, physic, exercise, &c., which, in order to oblige them, I complied with ; but my disorder not being bodily but spiritual, was not to be removed by these carnal quackeries, as they were soon convinced.

“ What I wanted was a skilful physician for my soul, to whom I could freely lay open my case, and from whom I might receive a healing balm for my wounded conscience ; but where to find such an one I knew not, what we must *do*, and what we must *not do*, being nearly the sum total of all the ministers’ sermons I ever remembered to have heard, which was but poor comfort for one who found he had done every thing that he ought not to have done, and nothing that he ought to have done.

“ I recollected, however, that once, if not oftener, the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, then tutor to two neighbouring young gentlemen, but since vicar of Madely, in this county, had in my hearing been spoken of in a very disrespectful manner, for things which seemed to me to savour of a truly christian spirit. I therefore determined to make my case known to him, and accordingly wrote him a letter, without mentioning my name, giving him some account of my situation, and begging him, for God’s sake, if he had a word of comfort to offer to my poor, distressed, despairing soul, to meet me that very night at an inn at Salop, in which place I then was. Though Mr. F. had four or five miles to walk, yet he came punctually to the appointment, and spoke to me in a very comfortable manner, giving me to understand that he had very different thoughts of my state from what I had myself. After our discourse, before he withdrew, he went to prayer with me, and among the other petitions that he put up in my behalf, he prayed that I might not trust in

my own righteousness, which was an expression that, though I did not ask him its import, I knew not well what to make of.

“After my conversation with Mr. Fletcher, I was rather easier, but this decrease of my terrors was but for a few days duration ; for, though I allowed that the promises and comforts he would have me apply to myself, belonged to the generality of sinners, yet I thought they were not intended for me, who had been so dreadful a backslider, and who, by letting my day of grace slip, had sinned beyond the reach of merey. Besides, I concluded that they could be made effectual to none but such as had faith to apply them, whereas I had no faith, consequently they could avail me nothing. I therefore wrote again to Mr. F., telling him, as nearly as I can remember, that however others might take comfort from the Scripture promises, I feared none of them belonged to me, who had *crucified the son of God afresh, and sinned wilfully after having received the knowledge of the truth*. I told him also, that I found my heart to be exceeding hard and wicked ; and that, as all my duties proceeded from a slavish dread of punishment, and not from the principles of faith and love, and were withal so very defective, I thought it was impossible God should ever accept them. In answer to this, the kind and sympathising Mr. F. immediately wrote me a sweet and comfortable letter, telling me that the perusal of the account I had given him, had caused him to shed tears of joy to see what great things the Lord had done for my soul, in convincing me experimentally of the insufficiency of all my own doings to justify me before God, and of the necessity of a saving faith in the blood of Jesus. He also sent me ‘The Life and Death of Mr. Haliburton, Professor of Divinity in the University of St. Andrews,’ which book I read with the greatest

eagerness, as the account Mr. H. therein gives of himself seemed in a very particular manner to tally with my own experience, especially the former part of it, wherein he speaks of the early commencement of his convictions, the distressing doubts he long laboured under concerning the being of a God, and his frequent relapses and falls into sin after the most solemn resolutions against it. Notwithstanding which, after his soul had been kept in fears and in bondage for some years, he was brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and after having been made an instrument in the Lord's hand of turning many unto righteousness, finished his course with joy, triumphing in God his Saviour, and bearing witness to the power of his grace and love to all that were about him. I therefore thought that what had been might be ; that the same God who had shewed himself so powerfully on the behalf of Mr. Haliburton, and delivered him out of all his troubles, was able to do the same for me ; and I was the more encouraged to hope that he would, as the experience of Mr. Haliburton during the former part of his life, had hitherto so nearly resembled my own.

“ These considerations made me for a time much easier ; but as the peace that resulted from them, was only the effect of my own reasoning, and was not accompanied with any divine sense of reconciliation wrought in me by the Holy Ghost, it did not long continue ; for I began to think that Mr. Haliburton had not sinned with such aggravating circumstances, nor bound himself under such solemn imprecations as I had done. You will wonder how I could hold out under all these pressures, the half of which, I might say, has not been told ; and indeed it was impossible I could have held out, had it not been that at those very times when I thought all was over with me,

there would now and then dart in upon me some comfortable glimmering of hope, which kept me utterly from fainting.

“In this situation I continued from September, 1757, to January, 1758, when the Vinerian Professor of Oxford being to read a course of lectures upon the Common Law, I resolved to set out for that place, not through any desire I had to attend the lectures, for I had no heart for any such thing, but because I knew I should have chambers to myself in College, and thereby have an opportunity of being much alone, and of giving way to those thoughts with which my heart was big, as also of seeking the Lord with greater diligence, if peradventure I might find him. Accordingly, when I arrived at the University, though to save appearances I dragged my body to several of the lectures, yet my poor heavy-laden soul engrossed all my attention; and so sharp was the spiritual anguish I laboured under, that I scarcely saw a beggar in the streets, but I envied his happiness, and would most gladly have changed situations with him, had it been in my power. O, thought I, these happy souls have yet an offer of mercy, and a door of hope open to them, but it is not so with me; I have rejected God so long, that now God has rejected me, as he did Saul; my day of grace is past, irrecoverably past, and I have for ever shut myself out of all the promises.

“All this while, one thing that greatly astonished me was to see the world about me so careless and unconcerned, especially many that were twice my age amongst the Doctors of Divinity, and Fellows of the College. Surely, thought I, these people must be infatuated indeed, thus to mind earthly things and to follow the lusts of the flesh, when an eternity of happiness or

misery is before them, when they know not how short a time they have to live, and their everlasting state depends on the present moment.

“ I believe I might continue in this deep distress of soul for near a month after my coming to Oxford. I numbered the wearisome days and sleepless nights: *‘ I said at evening, when will it be morning? and at morning, when will it be evening?’* Oh how sensibly did I feel the truth of that Scripture, *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?* ¹

“ It was now the season of Lent, the first or second Sunday in which, the sacrament of the Lord’s supper is always administered in Magdalen College Chapel. I therefore besought the Lord with strong cryings, that he would vouchsafe me some token for good, some sense of his love towards me and willingness to be reconciled to me, that I might wait upon him at his table without distraction, and partake of those blessings which that ordinance is instituted to convey to the souls of true believers.

“ And, O, for ever and for ever blessed be his holy name, he did not reject the prayer of the poor destitute; he heard me what time the storm fell upon me, and I make no doubt had heard, and in his purpose at least, answered me, from the first day that he inclined my heart to understand, and to seek after him. But he knew better than I did myself, when it was meet to speak peace to my soul, and therefore waited that he might be gracious unto me; first, in order to convince me the more deeply of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and of the desert thereof; secondly, to shew me more experimentally my own weakness and the

¹ Prov. xviii. 14.

insufficiency of any righteousness of my own to recommend me to his favor; thirdly, to make me prize more highly, and hunger and thirst more earnestly, for Jesus Christ, and the salvation that is in him. These ends being in some measure answered, on Saturday, February 18th, to the best of my remembrance, the night before the Sacrament, it pleased the Lord, after having given me for a few days before some tastes of his love, first to bring me into a composed frame of spirit, and then to convey such a thorough sense of his pardoning grace and mercy to my poor soul, that I, who was but just before trembling upon the brink of despair, did now *rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The love of God was shed abroad in my heart through the Holy Ghost that was given unto me, even that perfect love which casteth out fear; and the Spirit itself bore witness with my spirit, that I was a child of God.* Oh how great a change was this in so short a time! How surpassing all apprehension was the difference! I, who but a few nights ago, could scarcely suffer mine eyes to slumber, or mine eyelids to take any rest, through the despairing agonies with which I was overwhelmed, could not now, during the beginning of the night at least, get to sleep on account of the extatic comforts in which my soul was as it were absorbed. Yea, so exceedingly great were these joys, that my body could hardly support them; they in a manner overpowered me, and I was ready to cry out, 'Lord, hold thy hand, for I can bear no more.' O, how delightful now were the thoughts of death, when my soul should be delivered from the clog of clay, and instead of partaking of the streams below, should go and drink freely at the fountain of bliss above.

“ But though these comforts prevented me from going to sleep, yet I may say with Colonel Gardiner, that they refreshed me as the richest cordials, and strengthened me exceedingly to wait upon Jesus Christ at his table the following day, when I received the pledges of his dying love with such spiritual discernment and assurance of my interest in him, as I had never before experienced in the participation of that solemn ordinance.

“ Though I believe that many souls have had great terrors and great comforts, in whom no saving change was ever wrought; and on the other hand, that thousands have been effectually brought to Christ, whose convictions as well as consolations, have been so mild and gentle, that they have not been able to give any distinct account of their conversion, yet I confess it has been matter of joy to me, upon reading some parts of St. Austin’s experience, translated by Dean Stanhope, and the blessed Bishop Cowper’s own account of God’s dealings with him, to find that the work in them so exactly corresponded with that carried on upon my soul.

“ For some time after these sensible manifestations of God’s love were withdrawn, my mind was composed and my hope lively; but I had still at seasons, secret misgivings and many doubts as to the reality of my conversion, which put me seriously to examine my state, whether the Scripture marks of a work of grace were really to be found in me, or not; and in these examinations I had great help from those excellent books, *Guthrie’s Trial of a saving interest in Christ*, and *Palmer’s Gospel New Creature*. Add to this, that being now in London, I had there the opportunity of hearing that faithful minister of Christ, the Rev. Mr.

Romaine, whose discourses were so exactly descriptive of and adapted to my own experience, that they afforded me a good confirmation that I was indeed *passed from death unto life, and from the power of Satan unto God*. During my stay in London, it pleased God to make me acquainted with many of his people, to whom my heart was immediately knit with the closest affection ; yea, so great was my love to all those in whom I discerned the divine image of the Lord Jesus, that the yearnings of Joseph's heart towards his brethren will but very faintly express it. Be they who or what they would, high or low, rich or poor, ignorant or learned, it mattered not ; if I had reason to believe they were born of God and made partakers of a divine nature, they were equally dear to me ; my heart was open to receive them without reserve, and I enjoyed the sweetest fellowship and communion with them, whilst all other company was insipid and irksome. Yea, if I did but hear of a sincere christian, however distant or unknown to me in the flesh, I instantly felt a tender sympathy towards him and bore a part in his joys and griefs. But notwithstanding this and many other marks of grace, which I had reason to hope were discernible in me, yet was my soul still much oppressed with legal fears and misgivings ; though these were often diminished and alleviated, when I called to mind how wonderfully God had before manifested himself on my behalf, the consideration of which enabled me to trust my soul in his Almighty hands for the issue of future trials ; so that for about two years after this, I was in good measure relieved from those piercing terrors and that deep distress with which I was before overwhelmed. This you will say, was living upon frames and experiences, more than upon the exceeding

great and precious promises made to returning sinners in Christ Jesus. It is true it was so, and of this God soon convinced me; for I now began to doubt whether these great comforts I had set so high a value upon, might not be all delusion, or proceed from the workings of my own spirit; and if so, my case was just as bad as ever. My day of grace might still be past, and nothing yet remain for me but *a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.*

“Now was my soul again bowed down under the sense of the wrath of God; the broken law with all its thunderings and lightnings, again stared me in the face and flashed upon my conscience; my hope seemed to be giving up the ghost, and I saw nothing before me but the blackness of darkness for ever. I find by a memorandum which I have by me, that this was in April, 1759, soon after my return from London into Shropshire, where I had not been long before I wrote to Mr. Fletcher, giving him an account of my state.”

This letter is in a great degree, a recapitulation of what has been just stated, and therefore it is not necessary to introduce it here.

“After this,” he says, “It pleased the Lord to remove my burthen, and to exchange these sharp terrors of the spirit of bondage, for the sweet reviving comforts of the spirit of adoption, shewing me the rich treasures of gospel promises, and that they and not my own frames, were to be the ground of my hope and my stay in every time of need.

“This was about April 1759, since which time I may say with Bishop Cowper, that my soul has never experienced the like extremity of terror; and though I have had many ups and downs, many grievous temptations and sharp conflicts, much aridity of soul, deadness,

and strong corruptions to fight against, yet have I always found the Lord to be *a very present help in trouble* ; his grace has been sufficient for me in every hour of need, and I doubt not but all his dealings with me, however thwarting to my own ideas of what was fit and meet for me, have some way or other been subservient to my spiritual interest, since his most sure promise is engaged *to make all things work together for good, to those who love him and are called after his purpose.*

“ Particularly did I experience the truth and reality of this whilst I was indisposed in London. At the beginning of this illness, my faith was very weak and wavering, and all my evidences of grace were much clouded ; but I sought the Lord in earnest prayer, and committed my soul to him as a faithful creator, casting myself at the foot of the cross, and making no other plea than my own unworthiness and the Redeemer’s merit ; and through the tender mercy of my God, I soon had an answer of peace to my suit. My soul was brought into a calm, submissive frame, and I was enabled patiently to trust the Lord as to the issue of my illness, whether it were life or death ; though if I might have been permitted to have chosen for myself, to be *dissolved and to be with Christ*, appeared by far the most eligible.

“ Oh how amiable did the dear Lord Jesus now appear in my eyes ! In whatsoever character I viewed him, I saw that he was *altogether lovely, the chief among ten thousand, full of grace and truth* ; but above all the contemplation of him in his pastoral office, brought the greatest delight and comfort to my soul. I saw what a poor wandering sheep I had been, and was astonished at his transcendent love in seeking me when I was lost, and bringing me into his fold. Oh how sweet to my taste were these words. *I am the good Shepherd : the*

good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep; and he will give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and none shall pluck them out of his hand.

“ I found also an unusual delight in meditating on the resurrection of our Saviour. I saw by this, that the uttermost mite must needs have been paid that was due to divine justice, otherwise He that was arrested as the sinner’s surety, could never have been released from the prison of the grave. I say I scarcely saw this by the eye of faith, and was enabled to take up my word and say with the Apostle, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who maketh intercession for us.*’ Thus was I begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. But when I thought on the time when I should see this Jesus face to face, then was my soul in a manner *taken up into the third heaven*, and filled with ravishing delight in the anticipation of those pleasures which are at God’s right hand for evermore.

“ I believe I might continue in this sweet disposition of soul, more or less, for about a month, which was full as long as my slow fever and cold lasted, during which, however, I was not confined to the house above three or four days. Since this illness, I have had very little experience of the sensible manifestations of God’s love; but, on the contrary, have had much hardness of heart, deadness, and the strong workings of indwelling sin to struggle with, insomuch that I have often had much ado to keep my head above water; for indeed it is hard fighting when the Captain of our salvation does not animate us with his presence. But it is both my desire and endeavour in every hour of need, to have recourse

to the word of promise ; and *though I walk in darkness and have no light, to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay myself upon my God*, leaving all my concerns, both spiritual and temporal, in his hands, and casting all my care upon him who considers his people's *benefit* more than their *comfort*. I know that it is written, *as thy day is, so shall thy strength be* ; and again, *my grace is sufficient for thee*. I believe, therefore, that God will certainly prepare *me* for whatsoever he has prepared *for me* ; that he will proportion my strength to my trials, nor suffer me to be tempted above what I am able.

“ In this confidence I commit myself unto his keeping, desiring that his righteous will may in all things be done in me and by me ; and that my whole soul and body, and every member and faculty of each, may be under his guidance and devoted to his glory, till that Almighty Jesus, whom by grace I have taken as my *wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification*, shall be made unto me complete and everlasting *redemption* in the kingdom of heaven.

“ P. S. Since this was written, I desire to acknowledge to the glory of God, that my soul has been kept in much peace. The Lord has shewn me more of the iniquity of my own heart, and the riches of his own free grace in Jesus Christ. I have daily more experience how sweet and comfortable a thing it is to live by the faith of the Son of God, casting all my care upon him, believing that he careth for me. Lord, evermore increase in me this faith, Amen.”

CHAPTER II.

MR. RICHARD HILL THE INSTRUMENT OF THE CONVERSION OF HIS BROTHER ROWLAND. HIS LETTERS TO HIS BROTHERS ROWLAND AND ROBERT AT ETON, AND TO ROWLAND AT CAMBRIDGE.

CONVERSION OF MR. ROWLAND HILL.

THE account given in the last chapter of the conversion and early religious experience of Mr. Richard Hill, will have naturally raised an expectation of some record of the fruits of that genuine piety, which had taken such deep root in his mind. Happily, these were numerous, and evidenced the noblest Christian zeal. His family and all within reach of his influence, became the objects of his solicitude; and the success which attended the counsel he gave his brother Rowland when spending a Christmas at Hawkstone, during the time he was an Eton school-boy, has long been known and appreciated. It was this which laid the foundation of the extraordinary and effective course pursued by that eminent minister without intermission, till his death in the eighty-ninth year of his age. There was a strong similarity between the brothers in personal appearance; and their leading mental characteristics, except that the elder had naturally the more studious turn, were in many respects of the same kind. In ready wit and humour, and presence of mind, they were nearly equal; but in the power

of imagination and quickness of perception, Rowland not only surpassed his brother, but nearly every other man of his day. What he lost for want of application, seemed to be made up to him by intuition ; and the vigor of his understanding never failed under the feebleness of very old age. It was indeed most providential that the divine blessing attended the exertions of Mr. Richard Hill, to lead him in early youth, to seek happiness in religion ; for had not his undaunted resolution and humorous fancy been controlled by piety, what he would have become it is impossible even to imagine. Godliness could never be accused, as it often has been most falsely, of generating gloom in either of these excellent individuals ; and such was their gentlemanlike bearing towards all their acquaintance, that they who most despised their sentiments, were obliged to do justice to the winning courtesy of their deportment. While young Rowland was at Eton, he had the privilege of having his brother Robert for a schoolfellow ; and Mr. Richard Hill was in the constant habit of writing to both of them in a strain of the most affectionate advice. Mr. Rowland Hill preserved those letters with the greatest care, and some years ago sent a copy of one of them to a well known periodical, to shew the extent and wisdom of that fraternal vigilance which was made such a blessing to his boyhood. The originals are all in my possession, and with the exception of one letter¹ previously edited by me, will form the chief materials of the present chapter. The first is addressed to Rowland only ; but Mr. Richard Hill sometimes wrote to both his brothers at the same time.

¹ In the life of Mr. Rowland Hill.

To Mr. Rowland Hill, at Eton.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

Though I have been in town upwards of three weeks, yet I have hitherto deferred writing that I might let you know when the works of Archbishop Leighton, which you desired Archer¹ to buy for you, were to be at Eton, where you may expect to have them by the next machine, ordered for you at Eton, carriage paid. The reason they could not be got sooner, was owing to their being almost out of print. May you by the grace of God, be enabled to relish, digest, and practise the divine truths contained in the writings of this excellent prelate, than whom the Church of England² never had a brighter ornament; but what I particularly admire in this Archbishop, is that spirit of patience and resignation to the divine will under every dispensation, which breathes throughout all his compositions, and plainly discovers itself to have been the habitual temper of his renewed heart—a temper which is the very life and soul of Christianity, and which can alone bring true peace and comfort to the mind of the believer. But then how is this disposition to be obtained, since false presumption is often mistaken for peace of conscience, and a stupid apathy and insensibility may make a person think he has attained a true gospel resignation, when in reality he knows not what it means? If we may believe the Scriptures, it is faith which brings peace and resignation to the soul—*being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*; and again, *thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on thee*. The conscience

The pious valet of Mr. Richard Hill.

² He was Archbishop of Glasgow in the reign of Charles II.

being first awakened by the Holy Spirit to see its own defilement, and afterwards pacified by an application of the blood of sprinkling, attains a sweet composure and resting upon the faithfulness of the Redeemer and the all-sufficiency of his undertaking, and is assured that *all things shall work together for good to those who love God and are the called after his purpose*. This consideration makes it the desire of the Christian's heart, that the will of God may be done in him and by him ; and therefore under the most distressing circumstances or sharpest sufferings, he can say, " Lord, thou knowest what is good for me better than I do for myself, therefore *not my will but thine be done*." Moreover, the soul thus brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, sees an amiableness and excellency in Christ Jesus which before he knew nothing of. Once he could look upon the blessed Redeemer as having *no form nor comeliness in him that he should desire him*, but now he sees him to be *altogether lovely, the chief among ten thousand, full of grace and truth*. Having now obtained the precious faith of God's elect, Jesus is become precious to his soul ; *for to them that believe, he is precious*, says St. Peter. Time was when this poor perishing world and its riches, honours, and pleasures ran away with his affections, but the bent of his heart being now changed, he pants only after the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, the honour which cometh from God, and *those pleasures that are at his right hand for evermore*. Time was when his own will was his rule, and the commandments, ordinances, and people of God were all irksome to him ; but now, being *born from above, and passed from death unto life*, it is the desire of his heart to be guided by the word and Spirit of God. He counts his commandments no longer grievous, but a light and easy yoke ; he says of the ordi-

nances, *It is good for me to be here, and his delight is in the saints of the earth and all that excel in virtue.* These things, my dear brother, I am well assured you know by happy experience; and most certain it is, *that flesh and blood hath not revealed them unto you, for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned;* and human nature can rise no higher than its own source, which is *earthly, sensual, devilish;* but the anointing which you have received of God abideth in you, and shall lead you into all truth. “Nature,” says good Bishop Cowper, “is stark blind to the things of grace, since these only can be apprehended by divine illumination, nor can be taught by any other teacher than by the Spirit of God.” But, though it has pleased the Lord to show you in some measure the mysteries of his kingdom, yet remember that you are but *a babe in Christ*, and know but in part; therefore be frequent and earnest in prayer for fresh supplies of knowledge, faith, grace, and strength; and you have all possible encouragement to be so, since *in Christ all fulness dwells, and out of that fulness we receive grace for grace.* Learn, then, to guard against self-dependency, and to live more upon Christ; see that he be made unto you *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.* Resign yourself to him in all his offices, as a *prophet, priest, and king*—a prophet to teach you, a priest to make atonement for you, a king to reign over you and in you. View him in his pastoral office, in the character of the good shepherd, *the shepherd that gave his life for the sheep.* Consider his watchfulness and tender care for his dear chosen flock, *that little flock to whom it is his good pleasure to give the kingdom,* having redeemed them by his blood out of every tongue, and kindred, and people, having promised them eternal life, *and betrothed*

them to himself in faithfulness, that they might never perish, and none might pluck them out of his hands. Consider, my dear brother, how that when you, as a poor helpless sheep, were gone astray, this dear shepherd sought you and brought you back. Remember how, when wandering further and further from his fold, he made you hear his voice and follow him, *carrying you as a lamb in his bosom, and gently leading you whilst you were with young.* O, think of this love, which passeth knowledge, and may it fill your heart with praise, and your tongue with thanksgiving. Let it constrain you to live to him who died for you, and to grow daily more and more in conformity to his blessed image, that so you may *adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and by well doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, who would falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.* But remember that it is not sufficient that you set yourself against outward sins ; you must be watchful against *heart sins*, those sins that are most woven in you by nature and constitution ; therefore try and examine yourself what manner of spirit you are of. Take the Psalmist's advice ; commune with your own heart and in your chamber, and be still ; fear not to know the worst of your case at all times, since this is the only way to mend it, whilst self-ignorance and self-conceit have shipwrecked their thousands. Let pride, peevishness, and self-will be brought forth, lamented, mortified ; and, instead of these, seek to put on all the tempers and dispositions of the meek and lowly Jesus, with all the several lovely graces of his spirit. Bear patiently with the perverseness and oddities of those who are under the dominion of fallen nature, and therefore objects of pity, not of revenge ; condescend to the lowest offices for the lowest people, when you can thereby render the

least service either to their souls or bodies ; become all things to all men, so far as you can consistently with your holy profession, yet take care that you abuse not your liberty for a cloak to sin, for sin in the least degree allowed or consented to, will damp the comforts, deaden the graces, and hinder your progress in the divine life. See, then, that you be watchful against the first risings of sin. Dally not with so dangerous an enemy, and, though it will plead hard to be spared, give it no quarter, but *clothe yourself with the whole armour of God*, and fight like a true Christian soldier in the strength and under the banner of the *great Captain of your salvation*, till *Satan be bruised under your feet, and death be swallowed up in victory*. I shall add one word more, and I have done. Be diligent in your studies. However human learning may prove a snare to such as are vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds, yet in a gracious heart it is very desirable ; and if it is your prayer and endeavour that whatsoever attainments you make in profane literature may be subservient to the nobler end of rendering you instrumental to the good of souls, and useful to the church of Christ, there is no fear of your being hurt by those detestable maxims and principles with which the most admired classical authors abound ; but rather will they be the means of discovering to you the blindness and depravity of human nature, and the necessity of seeking that only true wisdom *that cometh from above*, and without which all other wisdom will prove in the end to be only refined folly.

And now, with my sincere prayers that if it be the will of God ever to call you to the work of the ministry, you may be fitted and prepared by his grace and Holy Spirit for that most important office, and by your steady attachment to our most excellent church, in a season wherein

there is so dreadful a departure from the doctrines of her homilies, articles, and common prayer, may prove yourself a faithful labourer in the vineyard of our blessed Lord, I conclude myself, your most affectionate brother,

Both by grace and nature,

RICHARD HILL.

P.S. Pray remember me in love to our dear brother, to whom you may either read or shew this letter, which I desire you will keep, as I hope it may hereafter, as well as at present, be of some use to you.

The next letter is addressed both to Mr. Rowland and Mr. Robert Hill.

Vine-street, March 4th, 1762.

MY DEAR BROTHERS,

I was in hopes of seeing you again before I went into Shropshire, but, as I have deferred my journey as long as possible, that Andrew (who, by the goodness of God, is got perfectly well through the smallpox) might be able to go with me, I am therefore obliged to take the nearest way, and cannot possibly call either at Eton or at Mr. Berkley's. However, I know I need not assure you that it is not through want of inclination, that I am not to converse with you any more upon the one thing needful before we meet at Hawkstone in the summer. [But] I trust the grace of God will keep you amidst all temptations by which you are beset, and that you will be diligent in the use of those means which he has appointed for the seeking and granting fresh supplies of that grace. Whatever you read, bring it home in self-application to your own hearts, and ask yourselves [each of you] this question—"Have I had any experience of these truths in my own soul." For it is not barely reading so many

religious books, nor being able to discourse on religious subjects, that constitutes the real Christian, but a deep sense of our own sinfulness by nature and practice, and of our great need of a Redeemer, with a true spiritual hunger and thirst after righteousness, and an earnest desire to be daily more and more conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Whatever falls short of this, deserves not the name of religion ; and so far from standing us in any stead, will only tend to deceive us with delusive and presumptuous hopes that have no foundation in the infallible word of God. I have sent you back that excellent little treatise, entitled "Heavenly Paths," having got some more of them since I saw you.

With my sincere wishes that you may be blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, and experience an abundant share of those solid joys and comforts which the vain and transitory pleasures of this world are unable to give, I subscribe myself, my very dear brothers,

Yours most affectionately,

RICHARD HILL.

A more striking instance of affectionate fraternal advice than that which is contained in this letter, has seldom met the public eye. At a time when most young men possessing Mr. Hill's qualifications for society, and in the anticipation of equal prospects, would have been fascinated by the world, he was bent on promoting the cause of his Redeemer, and yet by no means neglected the callings, or fell below the propriety of his station in life. The next specimen of his correspondence with his brothers at Eton is addressed to Mr. Robert Hill. A more touching appeal to a youth amidst the dangers of a great public school cannot well be conceived, and it may yet have uses for which Providence has caused it to be preserved.

To Mr. Robert Hill.

Sept. 29th, 1763.

I should act very unworthy the relation I stand in to my dear brother Robert, was I not to use every method in my power for promoting his present and eternal happiness, which are so inseparably connected, that it is the highest infatuation to fancy we can enjoy the one whilst we are without the well-grounded hope of the other ; for, alas ! what good can this world, with all its pleasures and gratifications, do any man whilst his sins are unpardoned, and the wrath of God abideth on him. He may, indeed, by a studied forgetfulness of eternity, and a round of vain amusements, put the concerns of his soul far out of his mind ; but still the hour of death approaches, and he must soon, very soon, be called to the bar of judgment whether he will or not. All his endeavours not to think of it cannot remove it one single moment further from him, but will only make it ten thousand times more dreadful when it does come. That this important hour may not come upon you, my dear brother, unawares, is the reason of my writing this to you, to call upon you by the great love I bear you, and, what is of infinitely greater consideration, by the love you bear your own precious soul, not to trifle with your day of grace, not to resist the calls of that good Spirit, who, I am sure, has been frequently striving with you, lest you provoke him to withdraw from you, and to swear in his wrath that you shall not enter into his rest.

It may, perhaps, sound strange if I tell you that it was indeed a great consolation to me, to hear you confess so ingenuously at Wolverhampton, that you thought you could not be saved if you were to die in the state you now are in. But the reason why this confession gave me

any satisfaction, was because it shewed you to be sensible that there must be a change wrought in you, which you were convinced was not yet wrought ; and to know this (even though it be not effected) is certainly much better than to be asleep in that wretched false confidence of salvation in which so many poor souls are deceiving themselves, because, perhaps, they are free from gross outward sins, and practise a formal round of duties ; which is, indeed, sufficient to make a man pass for a very good Christian in the eyes of the world. But I know you are well assured of the emptiness and vanity of such a religion as this, and that there is no such thing as serving God and mammon. Indeed, if you will believe the children of Satan, they will tell you that you may be conformed to this world and love God too ; that you may save your soul without taking up the cross and following Christ ; but if you will believe the Bible, that will tell you *that the friendship, &c. &c. ; that if any man love the world, &c. &c. ; that except a man be regenerate, &c. &c. ; and whosoever will be Christ's disciple, &c. &c.*—James iv. 4. John iii. 3. Matt. x. 24. Take heed, therefore, my dear brother, of being led away by any who speak not according to this rule, or who would so far soften and palliate the word of God, as to make it agreeable to corrupt nature. The Scripture is express, that *if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature* ; and, without he is thus a new creature in Christ Jesus, all hope of salvation is only an arrogant presumption. That the number of those who are created anew is very small, is a melancholy reflection, though at the same time it is a striking confirmation of our Saviour's words, that *strait is the gate, &c. &c. &c.* God grant that you may be among those happy few who are *striving to enter in at the strait gate, and working out their salva-*

tion with fear and trembling. But that this was not the case when you were last at home, you yourself know full well. And I doubt not when you approached the Lord's table, that your conscience witnessed to you that you were in a very improper state to go there ; for surely you cannot think that you had at that time any true hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, or that you really came as a poor humbled sinner to Christ, desiring to feed upon him by faith, and to receive out of his fulness grace for grace, or, as our Church Catechism expresses it, having lively faith in God's mercy, &c. &c., and truly repenting you, &c. &c. ; and without this disposition of heart receiving the holy sacrament only adds to your condemnation, forasmuch as you eat and drink unworthily, not discerning the Lord's body.

Another thing I must mention, is with regard to your going into orders. Should you ever be called to the important work of the ministry, think how many poor souls you must be answerable for as well as your own ; think how it will increase your guilt if you set up to be a teacher of others before you yourself be taught of God, and pretend to shew them the way to heaven when you yourself are not walking in it. Read in the thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel, what dreadful judgments are denounced against the unfaithful shepherds.

Should it please God to give a blessing upon what I have here said, the effect will soon be visible ; and there is no doubt but as soon as you begin to live contrary to the world about you, they will immediately testify their disapprobation of your conduct, using all their endeavours to prejudice you against vital religion, and to set you against the good ways of the Lord, and against his faithful people ; and perhaps they will even do this under a pretence of friendship for you, though all the while

they are giving you such advice as is as contrary to the holy precepts of the Gospel, as light is to darkness. I say, this you must expect not only from careless sinners, but even from decent formalists, who whilst they have much of the form of godliness, deny and hate the power of it. But I trust that none of these things will move you, for I am certain you know well that all who live godly, &c.; and that the religion which pleases the world will never please God, who calls for our whole hearts to be given to him, without which all our duties are but mockery of him and an abomination unto him. I say I am sure you know these things, and need not be told which is the right way, through which all must pass who would inherit eternal life. But then to know and not to practise, will but make you more like that unprofitable servant, who, because *he knew his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.*

O, that this may never be my dear brother's case! O that you may seriously lay to heart these awful considerations, and to-day, whilst it is called to-day, may hear the voice of him who stands at the door and knocks. Though all things are possible with God, yet the time of youth is chiefly the time of conversion, and if you now slight the warnings of God's Spirit, you will justly provoke him to leave you to yourself, and seal you up under impenitency. Do not then delay, but this very day, this very hour, resolve by the grace of God to break through every obstacle and come to Christ, that he may wash you by his blood, and renew you by his Spirit. Come, guilty and helpless as you are, and you have his promise that *he will in no wise cast you out.* I have nothing more to add than to desire you not to take any thing I have here said merely upon my own authority, but compare it with

the word of God, and with the Church of England, for only so far as it is agreeable thereto, I desire it may be attended to. And now, with my earnest prayers that God may vouchsafe his efficacious blessing on these imperfect endeavours for the good of your soul, I conclude,

My very dear brother,

Yours most affectionately,

[R.] H.

P.S. I think you would do well to shew this to Rowly, and to open your mind to him freely, as I know he will rejoice to find you desirous of walking with him in that strait and narrow way which leadeth to life.

To Mr. Rowland Hill, Eton.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

You will no doubt be rejoiced to hear, that by the blessing of God, on the means made use of for the recovery of our dear sister's health, I brought her perfectly well from Bristol to Hawkstone on Wednesday last. May he who hath effected this cure be pleased also to heal all the spiritual maladies of her soul, and may her temporal afflictions be sanctified to her eternal good, which, that they shall be, we have the promise of him who cannot lie; for it is written, *as many as I love I rebuke and chasten*; and again, *all things shall work together for good to those who love God, and are the called after his purpose*. O, what an unspeakable privilege it is to have a covenant God to fly to in every time of need! Blessed are the people that are in such a case, yea, blessed are they who have the Lord for their God!

Some directions and exhortations which I send by this post to a friend, who, by the free grace of our God, has

lately been made partaker of the blessings that are in Christ Jesus, may not be useless to you. I shall therefore transcribe them, hoping that, by the blessing of him who can make use of the feeblest instruments for the greatest ends, they will prove the means of your growth in grace, holiness, and comfort. They begin as follows :—

As we justly lament the folly of every one who thinks to build without first laying the foundation, so this folly is as much more flagrant in spirituals than temporals, as the concerns of the soul are more interesting than those of the body, or eternity more important than time. The first thing, therefore, that I would desire you to examine into is, whether you are really building upon the only sure foundation? And what that foundation is, the Apostle expressly declares in the following words :—*Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* 1 Cor. iii. 11. Try yourself, then, whether, as lost and undone in yourself, deeply sensible of the natural apostacy of your heart from God, weary and heavy laden with the burden of sin, and renouncing all hope and help from your own righteousness, duties, repentance, resolutions, &c., you do really rest upon Christ as your only and all-sufficient Saviour, relying solely upon his blood to pardon you, his righteousness to justify you, his Spirit to sanctify you. He it is who came to seek that which was lost, and we must see and feel ourselves lost without him, before we can in sincerity seek an interest in that salvation which he has purchased; for the whole need not a physician, but those who are sick, and so long as either in whole or in part, we cleave to our own doings, and are not brought off from all dependance on the covenant of works, one or other of these two things must happen—either we shall conceit so

highly of ourselves as to think lightly of, and greatly to undervalue, the redemption that is in Jesus, or else we shall walk in continual darkness and discomfort, and a legal, slavish dread of wrath, whereby all our avoiding of sin will proceed from a wrong principle—a principle of fear instead of love and gratitude—and all our obedience will be the forced drudgery of a slave, and not the effect of the filial disposition of a child. This I am convinced is the ease of many sincere people ; and it is wholly owing to a lurking spirit of self-righteousness and unbelief, which prevents them from submitting to the righteousness of God, and closing in with that full, free, all-sufficient salvation which the gospel holds forth to guilty helpless sinners, through the God-man, Jesus Christ, shewing them that by his obedience unto death the law is fulfilled, and infinite justice satisfied to the uttermost ; that, by his resurrection from the dead, God accepted the payment he made for his people, and discharged him from the prison of the grave in token of their full acquittal ; and that he is now at the right hand of God, entered as their head and forerunner, dispensing his gifts according to their various necessities, and making intercession for them, that where he is they may be also. Well, then, may we say with the Apostle, *Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect ? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth,*

nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I know well that the natural man, who discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God, is ever ready to object against this living wholly upon Christ, making him our all in all, our Alpha and Omega, as a doctrine that tends to licentiousness, and to the prejudice of morality and good works : I say this is the stale objection of almost all natural men, who even pretend to a mighty zeal for the interests of holiness, whilst they are living after the course of the world. But whosoever makes this objection, hereby plainly evidences himself never to have received the grace of God in truth, and to be a stranger to the nature of justifying faith and to the constraining power of Christ's love. For how is it possible that we should be one with Christ, and not endeavour to be like him ? If we partake of his Spirit, will not the fruits of that Spirit appear in our life and conversation ? Can he that is brought into the marvellous light of God's dear Son, have any longer fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness ? Can the head be holy, and the members unholy ? Can he that is united to Christ, be employed in the service of the devil ? Certainly not. It is true we are, as our Church observes, (Art. XI.) justified by faith only, without works ; but then it is as true, that there can be no real faith which does not produce good works, for the tree is known by its fruits ; and as faith is the root of works, so works are the fruit of faith. We do not then make void the law by faith ; God forbid, but we establish the law ; for though through our weakness we cannot be justified by it, yet it still remains as a rule of life to every justified believer. Besides, the Christian does not only look upon holiness as his duty, but as his privilege ; for

being vitally united to Christ by faith, he receives from him a new nature, being, as saith St. Peter, made partaker of the divine nature, which nature as much inclines him to holiness, as the old corrupt nature does to sin. Thus, being regenerate and born again, he is transformed in the spirit of his mind ; he hath put on Christ and is renewed in every faculty of his soul. But still, let us remember that we are renewed but in part : so long as we are in the body, we shall find a law in our members warring against the law in our mind ; the old man will still be striving for the mastery, and if he must die, will die hard. Let this consideration make you ever watchful over the first risings of sin, and may you be continually looking to Jesus for strength to check it in the bud, and not to harbour it one moment with delight, otherwise you know not into what iniquity you may be hurried, especially when any temptation from without meets with a suitable corruption in the heart to act upon. For want of attending to this caution, many a child of God has been dreadfully borne away with the tide of his lusts, and led to the commission of sins, which at other times, he could hardly have believed he could have fallen into. We see this evidenced in David's adultery, Peter's denial, &c. See therefore that you make conscience even of your most secret thoughts, and watch and pray that you enter not into temptation ; yea pray without ceasing, and however backward you may at times find the flesh to this exercise of prayer, yet never give way to sloth and listlessness ; but if you find your heart cold and dead, pray that it may be warmed and enlivened. Never rest satisfied with the mere performance of this duty, but always seek to maintain that communion with God in it, without which it will be dry and uncomfortable, and perhaps nothing better than lip-

labour. And for this end, it will be incumbent upon you to avoid, as much as your situation will allow, whatever may be destructive of a holy, lively, spiritual frame ; such as carnal company, vain conversation, and idle visits, which things greatly tend to deaden grace, and to extinguish the life of God in the soul.

To prayer add diligent reading of God's word, sup-
plicating that Spirit which inspired it, to be your teacher,
to lead you into all truth, and to enlighten your under-
standing that you may see the wonderful things of
God's law.

And now, my dear brother, I must add one caution
more to you. Take heed that you be not staggered by
the unprofitable walk of professors. Remember all is
not gold that glitters ; and that there is a great deal of
difference between knowledge in the head and grace in
the heart. Nay, even they who are really the children
of God by faith in Jesus Christ, have also their spots,
and do too often act greatly below the high dignity unto
which they are called. Beware, therefore, that you be
not encouraged to go beyond Christian liberty in any
matter, because you see other Christians do so ; but
whilst you copy their graces, be very careful not to be
led aside by their falls and infirmities. I am in a par-
ticular manner bound to repeat this caution to you with
regard to myself, from a consciousness that my example
before you has not been such as becometh the Gospel ;
but be assured that this reflection affords me constant
matter of humiliation, and that it is the earnest desire of
my heart to be daily more and more conformed to the
image of Christ, and more and more meet to be a par-
taker of the inheritance among the saints in light.

As the directions here laid down are diametrically
contrary to the principles and practices of a world lying

in wickedness, it is not to be doubted, but your adherence to them will bring upon you much reproach and opposition, from those who are yet in their natural state of blindness and alienation from God, whether careless or formal; for there cannot be conceived two things more contrary, than the Spirit of Christ which dwells in all true believers, and the spirit of the devil which reigns in all the children of disobedience. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, and Christ has chosen you out of the world, therefore the world will hate you. But be of good cheer, He who spoke these words tells you that he has overcome the world for your sake. If we would have Christ, we must have his cross also; and if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him.

I have at other times said so much to you on the necessity of minding your studies, that I trust I need say no more on that head, not doubting but you will by divine grace, endeavour to overcome natural slothfulness of disposition, which otherwise will be a great hindrance to you in your temporal as well as your spiritual concerns.

I cannot conclude this epistle without my grateful thanks to your Christian friend Mr. Stephen, for all his kindness to you; God grant that you may profit by his exhortations.

And now, my very dear brother, with my sincere prayers for your growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, I conclude.

Yours most affectionately in every dear tie,

R. H.

To Rowland Hill, Esq. St. John's College, Cambridge.

Hawkstone, Dec. 17, 1764.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

I think I cannot begin my letter with a more acceptable piece of news, than that of dear little Brian's¹ safe recovery from the small-pox, with which distemper he was seized the fifth of this month. By the blessing of God, it has had a safe turn, which began on Wednesday, and he is now getting better fast. * * *

You say that as you have about five weeks' vacation at Christmas, you should be very happy to spend it with my sister T. [udway] in London ; and indeed I should be very glad to have you there, both because I have daily more and more reason to hope the Lord is at work with her soul, and because you would there enjoy so many blessed opportunities of hearing the Gospel and of conversing with the people of God ; but as my brother Tudway and she do not leave Hawkstone till some time next month, your vacation would be nearly over before they reach town, otherwise the *shortness of your purse* should have been no hindrance to your journey, and as you will have about a fortnight's vacation at Easter, if they give you an invitation to come up then, I will gladly defray all your expenses. * * *

I rejoice at the account you send me of your Eton companions, and of their zeal for God ; may he continue to prosper their endeavours for the good of souls more and more, and enable them by their own lives and conversation, to bring honour to the name of Christ in this perverse and crooked generation, which I am sorry

¹ Their younger brother, afterwards the Rev. Brian Hill.

to say so few professors do. It is easy enough to talk and pass as a Christian, but to be a Christian altogether is indeed a very great thing. A Christian is light in darkness ; a city set on a hill. A Christian is the salt of the earth. A Christian is chosen out of the world. A Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Ghost. A Christian is born again of the Spirit, and made partaker of the divine nature. A Christian is one with Christ, and Christ is one with him. A Christian is a member of Christ's body, of his blood, and of his bones. There is a stronger union between a Christian and Christ, than between a vine and the branches, a husband and wife, food and the eater, a building and every stone that belongs to it. A Christian is a servant of God, a child of God, a friend of God, a co-heir with Christ, a brother of Christ, the spouse of Christ. And wherefore all this, but that he *should show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into the marvellous light of God's dear son?* A Christian, then, should make the glory of God the end of all his actions. He must not be conformed to this world, nor even venture to the utmost brink of his liberty; for if he does, says dear Archbishop Leighton, he will be in danger of going beyond it. A Christian's life ought to be a continual sermon. He ought never to countenance the carnal world in those things wherein their carnal hearts are engaged, however innocent they may be in themselves ; for that which is lawful, is not always expedient, and the pomps and vanities of this world, as well as the sinful lusts of the flesh, must be renounced. Oh ! we none of us consider sufficiently how great a thing it is to be a Christian.

Though you will receive this some days before Christmas, yet as that blessed festival is now approaching, I am naturally led to say something relative to the

season, and to express my sincere wishes that you may really spend a joyful Christmas and a happy new year : *happy* and *joyful*, not in the common acceptation of these epithets as usually annexed to this wish, and implying an abundance of feasting, rioting, and carnal mirth—horrid profanation !—but happy and joyful in the best and scriptural sense of the words, with a calm, holy, spiritual joy ! May all the great and glorious ends of our Immanuel's incarnation be answered in you and by you, and may you indeed find him unto you a Saviour, even Christ the Lord.

Again, with regard to the approaching new year, what better questions can we put to ourselves than some such as these ? I see that time flies swiftly away. I see days and years pass over my head like the vanishing smoke. I see that I am hasting to eternity faster than even the wings of the wind could carry me, and know not but this hour may finish my course. To eternity ! where, if I am found in Christ, endless happiness waits my departing soul. If not, what have I to expect but blackness of darkness for ever, in that *lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth* ? What effect have these awful considerations had upon me ? Am I more given up to God this year, than I was the last ? Am I waiting for the bridegroom's call, having my loins girt, my lamp trimmed, and my oil burning ? Does my faith shew itself in my fruitfulness in all good works ? Are the divine graces of hope and love kindled in my heart, and am I bringing these graces into action by purifying and cleansing myself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God ? Is pride and every other evil temper become more mortified ? Is my zeal for the glory of the

Redeemer, and for the increase of his kingdom in the hearts of sinners, more lively and active than it was the last year? Are my chief companions and friends those who love and fear God; or, if I am situated where none such are to be found, is it the grief and burden of my soul to see the Gospel salvation so sadly slighted and neglected? In a word, is Christ more precious and is sin more odious to me now, than they were this day twelvemonth? Or is the matter quite otherwise with me? Do I see time advancing, life advancing, everything in creation advancing towards its period, and that which ought to advance the fastest, viz., the true interest of my immortal soul, alone standing still, or, what is worse, advancing towards destruction?

These, or such like inquiries, I would often put closely home to my own heart, particularly at the commencement of every new year, as a spur to my growth in grace with my growth in age, and as motives to convince me more experimentally of the vanity of time and the importance of eternity.

* * * *

* * * *

I know it will give you true satisfaction to hear of the progress of God's work in these parts. Miss —— and Miss —— have set up a weekly meeting for women, which is very well attended, and Mr. —— has set up a meeting for men, at which there are always about sixty or seventy persons present. One night Mr. —— prayed and expounded there, whereupon the devil stirred up Mr. —— to oppose very much, and to threaten to commence a prosecution against Mr. ——, but how the affair will end I know not; certain it is, there is nothing can be done without God's permission.

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And now with my sincere wishes and prayers for your

swift advancement in your learning, but particularly for your advancement in the school of Christ,

I conclude myself,

Your most affectionate brother,

Both by nature and grace,

R. H.

The great interest which the energetic career of Mr. Rowland Hill excited, during a ministry of sixty years' never-failing popularity, will render these letters particularly acceptable to all who are capable of appreciating their intrinsic excellence, and know the circumstances under which they were written. The last of them is dated the day before Mr. Berridge wrote young Rowland the singular but affectionate note soliciting his acquaintance, which I have inserted in his life. The letters of such a brother as Mr. Richard Hill, must have been to him consolations beyond all value at that time, for he was surrounded by opposition from every possible quarter. Probably, also, the exhortations thus given him, were the cause of his being found in the list of *honors* on proceeding to his B.A. degree; for his monitor, while he did not discourage his well-known activity in preaching and visiting the gaol and cottages, at Cambridge, most wisely urged him to suffer nothing to induce him to neglect his studies.

Not only did Mr. Richard Hill thus affectionately excite his brothers Robert and Rowland to a care for their souls, but he likewise directed his exertions to all with whom he was in any way connected. The tenantry on his father's estate, and the servants of the family, were the especial objects of his attention. A Bible was placed by him in the servants' hall—a rare thing in those days—

with various excellent books selected with admirable judgment, as appears from a memorandum of them still remaining in his own hand writing. It is called "A memorandum of books lent out," and the following extract will prove the truth of my observation:—"Servants' Hall.—Alleine's Alarm—Shower on Time and Eternity—Bishop Hopkins' Sermons—Doolittle's Love to Christ—Shower's Heaven and Hell—A Bible." His own personal attendant, as will soon appear, was a most devoted Christian, and happy indeed are the masters who possess and value servants like him. It is well known that all the members of his family did not approve of his views and conduct; but in his sister, Miss Jane Hill, he possessed an admirer and assistant, whose character exhibited a most attractive union of the beauty, wisdom, firmness, and dignity of vital Christianity. How admirably she assisted him in corresponding with their brother Rowland will be seen in the third chapter.

CHAPTER III.

CHARACTER OF MISS JANE HILL. HER LETTERS TO MR. ROWLAND HILL,
AT ETON AND CAMBRIDGE. HER ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF MR.
RICHARD HILL'S FAITHFUL SERVANT, ARCHER. HIS MASTER'S TRI-
BUTE TO HIS MEMORY.

MISS JANE HILL.

THE accomplished lady, mentioned at the conclusion of the last chapter, was the writer of those striking letters published with her name in the life of her friend, Lady Glenorchy. They form a most attractive portion of that volume; and the admiration which they have so justly called forth, will naturally give to her correspondence with Mr. Rowland Hill, at Eton and Cambridge, a more than common interest. She seconded, with all the force of a most persuasive manner, the efforts of Mr. Richard Hill to instil Christian precepts and useful advice as to his studies, into the youthful mind of their newly-awakened brother. In addition to natural gifts of no ordinary kind, Miss Jane Hill was possessed of a spirit of genuine piety, the fervor whereof was effectually regulated, though not at all impaired, by a peculiar sobriety of judgment. Her countenance was altogether the index of the refined qualities of her mind; and its sweet, intelligent expression was graced by an air of sincerity, which ensured the unbounded confidence of

those who enjoyed the privilege of her friendship. She read and thought much, but prayed more, of which we shall have abundant evidence in the tone of her pious letters to young Rowland. He treasured them up through his long life, with a care that he bestowed only on those of his brother Richard, Whitfield, Berridge, and two or three other friends of his opening day of exertion in the cause of Christ.

Miss Jane Hill's first letter is as follows :—

To Mr. Rowland Hill, at Eton.

Jan. 7, 1764.

MY DEAR ROWLY,

I rejoice to hear by the letter Mamma had from you last post, that you arrived safe at Eton, and met with no inconveniences from the floods. This mark of the care of the Almighty over you, may furnish you with fresh matter for praise and thankfulness; and indeed so innumerable are the instances of divine mercy, that we have cause continually to dwell on the delightful theme of praise which we trust will be our employment to all eternity, joining with the heavenly host in singing hallelujahs to the God of our salvation, whose glory should be celebrated with joy and triumph by his reasonable creatures. Praise is the work of angels; the more, therefore, we abound in holy, humble, thankful, joyful, praise, the more we do our Father's will as they do it. Oh, how insipid and tasteless do the pleasures of the world appear, to those who have some experimental knowledge of that only true joy which cometh from above, and which is centred in the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures for evermore. Christ is to the believer all that he

can wish for, or his heart desire; he is *as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land*. There is that in him, his name, his graces, his comforts, his undertaking for poor sinners, which may be their continual comfort and support. They that are weary and heavy laden, in Christ may find rest; in him are all the precious privileges of the new covenant, purchased by his blood, and communicated by his spirit. How sweet are the promises in the word of life, to a believing soul which rests upon the Lord Jesus! How sweet the knowledge of pardon, the assurances of God's love, the joys of the Holy Ghost, the hopes of eternal life, and the present earnest and foretastes of it, to those that have their spiritual senses exercised! If the pleasures of sin are distasteful to us, divine consolations will be sweet to our tastes, *sweeter than honey and the honeycomb*; and we may say with the spouse, *As the apple-tree amongst the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons; I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste*.

Surely nothing on this side heaven, can be compared with the delights which are attendant on communion with the Redeemer, and the sensible manifestations of his love; well may we desire a continuance of such blessed views and visits. But Christ will, at his good pleasure, withdraw those extraordinary communications of himself, for he is a free agent, and his Spirit, as the wind, blows when and where it listeth; and in his pleasure it becomes us submissively to acquiesce. Our great care must be that we do nothing to provoke him to withdraw, and to hide his face; that we carefully watch over our own naturally corrupt and desperately wicked hearts, and suppress every thought that may grieve his good Spirit. Those that experience divine comfort should greatly fear sinning it away.

I now, my dear brother, must conclude my letter, but

not without a word or two entreating you to be diligent in your school studies, and to desire you will be particularly mindful of reading English in your private hours. It is the sincere affection I bear you, which makes me thus anxious for your improvement. I have often urged to you the disgrace an ignorant clergyman is to religion. God knows what profession is allotted for you ; but, be it what it will, your indefatigable care is indispensably needful ; and human learning is a most desirable jewel, in order to set off the lustre of those in a sanctified heart.

I shall expect *no* answer to this letter, but when you next write, remember to send word if you called on Mrs. More, at Oxford. Our dear brother R.¹ arrived well in town, as did Mr. Tidway² and my sister. I hope your young friend grows in grace. * * * *

[J. HILL.]

Miss Hill wrote to her brother Rowland again before he left Eton ; but as I have given the substance of that letter in his life, I proceed to her first letter to him on his entering the University.

To Rowland Hill, Esq., St. John's College, Cambridge.

Oct. 10, 1764.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

You may reasonably before now expect to have heard from me, in answer to those letters I received from you during my stay at Lord Dartmouth's. My heart has been with you, though my pen has been unemployed, on

¹ Mr. Richard Hill.

² This gentleman was their brother-in-law. He was many years Member for Wells, in Somersetshire, and was for some time father of the House of Commons.

account of my waiting till Mr. Tudway came home to direct my letter, which not being yet the case, I shall no longer delay writing.

I was, indeed, greatly concerned when I found we were not to meet again before your journey to Cambridge, but the consideration that it was the will of our ever blessed and adorable God, made me thankfully submit, as he knows what is good for his children better than they do for themselves ; and I trust the fiery trials with which you were encompassed before you left home, have all worked together for the good of your precious soul, and that those which you will doubtless meet with during your stay at the University, will make you cleave more closely by faith to Jesus, the author and finisher of that faith. Oh, my dear brother, may that blessed God-man strengthen you with strength in your soul according to his word, which, as the bread of life, strengthens the heart to undergo what God is graciously pleased to inflict upon his people. May he assist you to do the duties, and courageously to resist the various temptations with which the soul is continually beset, both from within and from without, and to bear up under every trouble you may meet with in your present pilgrimage. The power of Jesus should be the Christian's support in every time of trial, and we have a gracious promise that it will be so, if we by faith and prayer apply unto him. Then will all that the enemies of our peace can contrive against us, be brought to nothing. Jesus is strong ; happy that he is so, for we are frail, weak, and impotent ; yet he can hold us up, and enable us to stand fast. The weakest believer that hangs upon him, though all the terrors of hell, the assaults of Satan, the world, and the allurements of sinful nature be against him, will find Jesus a secure defence, and his standing as unshaken as the strongest

structure supported by columns of brass. O, glorious and most consolatory thought, Christ is unchangeable, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; he cannot fail us; it is impossible. Build, therefore, upon him: no storms can shake the building whose foundation is on the rock Jesus Christ. Strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, we are enabled in all temptations to defy the ever-watchful enemies of our salvation. Here, then, my dear brother, let us take comfort, however great our trials may be, however beset on every side, without fighting, within fears; though of ourselves weak and helpless, utterly unable to withstand the shock of the least storm or tempest, yet if we are found in Christ we are secure. In the Lord have we strength, and none, no, *none* shall pluck us out of his hand. Till Satan prevail against our foundation, Christ, we cannot fail. The more, therefore, as Mr. Haweis advises in one of his sermons, the more we are beset on every side, whether by the world opposing or persecuting, or from our own hearts within ensnaring and discouraging us, the more let us fly to him. Let all work together to teach us our want of him, and unite us faster to him by faith, and then we shall find, by delightful experience, that he is able to keep us from falling, and that when we are weak, then shall we be strong, through the power of Christ strengthening us. In every danger, his sweet support shall cheer the spirits of the drooping soul. *Fear not*, says he, *for I am with thee.* * * *

Your epistle to my brother arrived last post. He will soon answer it on the subject you desire. In the mean while stand fast in the Lord, and let not Satan distress your soul with doubts and fears. Take hold on the covenant of grace. Christ—O, the wonders of redeeming love—Christ has done *all* for you; he has left you

nothing to do, no conditions to bring; only believe, watch, and pray, lest you enter into temptation. I need not, my dear brother, tell you that the whole ground on which our acceptance with God is built is the righteousness of Christ; for this, says Mr. Walker,¹ is the provision made in the case by the covenant of grace, so that our justification with God cannot be *forwarded by any thing good in us* on the one side, nor *hindered by our guilt* on the other. We are justified by a righteousness not wrought *in us* by the Spirit, but wrought *for us* by Christ. He has done his part in the covenant of grace, has been obedient unto death, and thereby has vindicated God's government and satisfied his justice. My dear brother, why should we doubt? We can never have deserved so much as Christ has merited. Justice can have no demand upon the believer. Jesus has discharged *all*. It is true we have sinned, greatly sinned, but we are assured our iniquities are laid on Jesus, and shall we suppose that God will demand payment of us also? These are dishonourable fears. Cleave close to Jesus by faith, and lay hold on the everlasting promise of the gospel. This is a subject which might fill volumes; at present I have not time to enlarge upon it, and I trust there is no occasion for me to do so.

Mr. Fletcher² has preached at Hodnet, and given great offence. I hope his labour was not wholly in vain, though I have not heard of any good being done. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but God must give the increase. Lord Cardross is now here; he has, I think, great experience of divine things in his soul, and is a check to opposers. I trust he may be of use in this family. Your dear Christian friends here are all well,

¹ The Rev. S. Walker, of Truro.

² The well-known Mr. Fletcher, of Madeley.

and beg to be kindly remembered to you, as does my sister T[udway] and the rest of the family. Adieu, my very dear brother. May the abundant consolations which are in Christ Jesus, attend you. So prays

Your unworthy sister,

J. H.

Nothing can surpass the spirit of true piety which runs through every line of this letter. Nor is the next specimen of its writer's spiritual advice, less creditable to the kind sister who addressed it to her youthful brother, when he was much cast down by the trials in which he was involved, and complained of that sense of barrenness of heart which is often the prelude to an abundant dew of the divine blessing.

To Rowland Hill, Esq., St. John's College, Cambridge.

Nov. 30th, 1764.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I received your Christian letter last post, which I cannot defer answering as soon as possible ; and may the Almighty God direct me what to say for your comfort and edification in grace and holiness, though, indeed, my dear brother, I am such a babe in the Redeemer's family, as to be but ill qualified to administer advice to others. Let us pray continually for increase of grace to Him who giveth power to the faint, and increase of strength to them that have no might. Our help is in the name of the Lord ; O, may his good spirit help our infirmities, and enable us against our sins. Be assured that He that has brought you on hitherto, will never leave you nor forsake you. The word of God is engaged

in your behalf, and cannot fail you. *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.* My dear, dear brother, I should be very uneasy concerning the present dark state of your soul, were I not convinced that almost all who have been savingly awakened and brought to the true knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, have at times experienced the same state of spiritual desertion, of which David is a most remarkable instance. Our Lord's design in such desertions is for the trial of our faith and patience, consequently for the good of his people's souls. He is righteous and just in all his dealings, and when we are deprived of the faith of assurance, we must live by a faith of adherence. My dearest brother, be frequent and earnest at the throne of grace; be diligent in reading and meditation on the written word, and God will no doubt in due season, shine with transcendent lustre on your now benighted soul. Christ himself, you see, for a time seemed to be cast off by his heavenly Father, when, in the bitter anguish of his soul, he cried out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Yet even then, he obtained a most glorious victory over the powers of darkness. God's spiritual Israel, through him also, are more than conquerors. Though for a season they may seem cast off, God will assuredly bring them into the *strong city* at last. A lively faith in the ever-blessed and most comfortable promises, will raise our drooping souls to joy and gladness, and shew us not only that the God of peace shall tread Satan under our feet shortly, but that it is our Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom. How comfortable is that dependance we may have on the

eternal son of God to perform all things for us by his wisdom, goodness, power, providence, promise, and grace. O, let us on all occasions place our entire trust and confidence in him. He will guide us when we are in doubt, protect us in danger, support us in want, and strengthen us for every good word and work.

Mrs. ——— is now here. I trust she is at least desirous, and cannot help hoping there is grace in her heart; and, if the seeds are sown, God no doubt will ripen them. She was much struck by a sermon Lord Cardross read to her one morning at Prees, setting forth the character of a formalist in very lively colours, and the necessity of a new birth, in order to be meet partakers of the kingdom of heaven.

Thou, O blessed God, art neither unjust, unkind, nor untrue in any of thy dispensations; and, though thou withdrawest the sunshine of thy comforts from thy faithful people, yet thou lovest them, and art true to thy covenant with them. In all our necessities let us be looking to Jesus, for he is our chief good and highest end; our owner, ruler, and judge; our gracious benefactor, our sure guide, and strict observer. Blessed Paul set the Lord always before him; for, even in bonds and afflictions, he could triumphantly say, *None of these things move me*. It is very certain that nothing can affect the true child of God more than spiritual desertions, when evidences are clouded, divine consolations suspended, and communion with the Most High interrupted. How insipid, then, are all other comforts. These burdensome complaints are, however, a good token of spiritual life and spiritual senses exercised. Oh, what great need have we to adore and magnify the great God of heaven, that he at any time should stoop so low as to allow poor sinful mortals any communion or inter-

course with him ; yet this in mercy he condescends to, though for wise reasons he sometimes withdraws the light of his countenance from them. O, let us adore thee, great God ; let us know thee, acknowledge thee, love thee, walk with thee, and enjoy thy presence here ; and, whilst we remain in this world, let us employ ourselves in contemplating thy perfections, and the love of Jesus, till we are raised up to the fruition and vision of thee, our only God and our dear Saviour, who hast wrought out redemption for us, and who proclaimest redemption to us, who art both mighty and eternal, and therefore art able to save to the uttermost.

Our dear friends at Hodnet are all well, and the sweet, amiable Miss —— has given her consent to make Mr. —— happy, by being his partner for life. She sees God's hand in it, and has every promising appearance of lasting happiness.

I have sent you Mr. Romaine's picture, according to your desire. May the image of Christ be more and more stamped upon your mind and mine, and may we who profess a faith in him, experience more and more the power of his death and resurrection in our souls, to his glory in the world, and our own abundant peace and growth in holiness.

Miss —— —— came here to-day. I have had a great deal of serious talk with her, and, blessed be God, I think she is in earnest pursuit of the kingdom of heaven. Let us strive with greater earnestness to enter in at the strait gate. My brother Hill is at Berwick, or would send his love to you. I hope I shall soon hear that you are in a more comfortable state of soul. May all blessings in Christ Jesus attend you. Pray for

Your very affectionate sister,

J. H.

There were but few undergraduates at this time in Cambridge, who would have desired or ventured to place the picture of Mr. Romaine on the walls of their College room. A happy change indeed has taken place in the religious condition of this University, and the period at which these letters were written, was the dawn of that brighter day which it now enjoys.

Mr. Rowland Hill spent his first Christmas after he entered College, with Mr. Berridge, and found himself much refreshed by intercourse with the pious Christians who gathered round their singular but devoted leader. His intimacy with that zealous man was far from being approved by all the members of his family, and accordingly his sister cautioned him against the too frequent repetition and publicity of his visits to Everton. Her letter is a rare example of the wisdom as well as fervour of true religion ; and, if the character of Mr. Berridge had been qualified with a little more of the former, his own course might have been more effective of solid good, and his counsel to others more valuable, at least in its permanent results.

To Rowland Hill, Esq., St. John's College, Cambridge.

Hawkstone, Feb. 2d, 1765.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

As Mr. Jackson is going to Cambridge, I cannot omit the opportunity of writing to you, though I fear I shall only have time for a short letter. We rejoice much at the happy Christmas you spent with Mr. B[erridge], 'as well as at the other opportunities you have of conversing with the dear children of God, whose experience, discourse, and admonition I trust you will find

abundantly blessed to your soul, and that you will not fail to prosper amongst the trees of righteousness, and to bring forth much fruit to the honour and glory of that God who has brought you out of darkness into his marvellous light, and made you to know and experience the felicity of his chosen. But my brother H[ill] and self both think it proper to give you a caution how you go too frequently to Mr. B[erridge] ; for, should that be discovered, I need not tell you the storm it would raise. It is, indeed, a happy privilege to have outward fellowship with those who are walking in the King's highroad to Zion ; for, as we talk of him by the way, Jesus himself draws nigh, and makes our hearts burn within us whilst he explains to us those Scriptures which testify of him, in whom all the promises are yea and amen. I frequently see our friends at Hodnet. Miss —— and Mr. —— will be married about Easter, immediately after which my brother and self set out for London, where we hope to spend much comfortable time in the means of grace ; but we must remember that all will be unprofitable unless we keep a fixed eye on the fountain head, which we are too apt to lose sight of whilst we eagerly follow the streams. My brother has sent you two books. *

* * * * *

As to Mrs. ——, I have not yet given her your letter. If she *had* any serious impressions, I fear they discontinue, and the voice of the worldlings, like the noise of great waters, seem to have borne irresistible sway. Oh, my dear brother, does it not make your heart melt with pity to see the purchased salvation so miserably neglected, and offers of merey so madly slighted. Jesus seems in vain to say that not all those who say unto him “ Lord, Lord,” shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; in vain to bid the multitude of

sinner's strive to enter in at the strait gate. The unbelieving throng, borne away by the strong stream of ungodliness, refuse to listen to the voice of the shepherd, or to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. The ravening wolves, clothed like harmless sheep, betray them, till finally the chains of darkness hold them fast for the day of fierce vengeance. O, deceitful, foolish, dangerous presumption ! Do thou, great God, of thy infinite mercy, awaken all who are yet asleep in carnal security, to a due sense of their misery and danger ; let them no longer say that they are rich and increased in goods, when they are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. O, that they may with broken and contrite hearts, like the repenting publican, or like Saul, be praying day and night for the Spirit of God, *Lord, be merciful to me a sinner ; Lord, what must I do to be saved ?* Oh, how precious is faith in the blood of Christ, which can not only cure the wounds in a dying soul, but restore life to a soul already spiritually dead ! Would to God, that all who are yet dead in trespasses and sins may come to the throne of grace, condemned by their own consciences, heavy laden with the remembrance of their sins, and labouring under the weight of their hardness of heart and unbelief. May they implore the mercy of their judge, till he shews himself to be their *Father* in giving them his spirit of adoption ; their *Jesus* in being their Saviour from their sins ; their *Christ* in making them partakers of his Spirit ; their *Immanuel* in revealing himself to them, and in inhabiting their hearts by faith. Let it, my dear brother, be our constant, unwearied endeavour to find and feel in our hearts more of the powerful efficacy of true Christianity, that we may be rooted and firmly established in faith, praying for increase of grace, that we fall not under the various as-

saults of our spiritual enemies, which are ever on the watch, seeking whom they may devour.

Let us ever be watchful and diligent in prayer, to the end that the profession we make of Christianity, and the many means we enjoy, may never rise up in judgment against us at the last day. May the Lord, our righteousness for justification, be also our strength for the present salvation of our souls from the dominion and slavery of sin.

I must hasten to a conclusion. When you write to me, always direct to my brother. You need not put your letters in double covers, as what you say to one concerns the other equally. All here join in blessing, love, and compliments.

Yours most affectionately,

J. H.

The next communication from Miss Hill to her brother Rowland, was to acquaint him with the death of Mr. Richard Hill's pious servant, Archer.¹ The regard of his employer for this worthy man, and the respectful gratitude he manifested in return, shew the happiness which religion brings upon all the relations of life, and the security it affords for the performance of the reciprocal duties of masters and servants, so often unsatisfactory, because based upon wrong principles. The letter of this excellent lady sets before us an instructive example.

¹ There is a tablet to the memory of this Christian servant on the wall of Hodnet Church, alike honourable to a kind master and an upright and devoted attendant.

To Rowland Hill, Esq., St. John's College, Cambridge.

*Hawkstone, Thursday night,
Feb. 6, 1766.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

My last letter was to inform you of the death of poor Sir Brian, at which I dare say you were much concerned. This, too, will contain an account of a scene of mortality; but, blessed be God, such a one as should make the heart of every Christian exult with gratitude, wonder, love, and praise; yet one that gives us the greatest concern, and which I doubt not will affect you. After this preparation, I will proceed to tell you that poor Archer is gone to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. I think I informed you in my last that he was ill. Never was a more instructive death-bed. Never was faith more strong than in the blessed deceased. During the whole of his illness, he enjoyed an uninterrupted sense of the love of God in his soul, and communion with him. On his first seizure, which is near three weeks since, when I was reading part of a letter to him, in which was the name of *Jesus*, he fell as it were in an ecstacy, but recovering himself a little, said words to this effect, 'O, Madam, that name, that name you mentioned, I find it as ointment poured forth. Sweet Jesus, he indeed is my shepherd.' He continued growing weaker and weaker daily, but as his bodily strength decayed, his faith seemed to strengthen. On Monday last he took a solemn farewell of my brother, his wife, and other mourning friends. The agonies of death seemed upon him; however, it pleased God to allow him a little longer time on earth, and he was so much better yesterday as to give great hopes of his recovery; but he

said to his wife, 'Do not flatter yourself, I must die ; I have had another call from God ;' and accordingly this day, soon after twelve o'clock, he sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. O, how strong was his faith to the very last gasp ! What encouragement, my dear brother, is this for us to press forward towards the promised land, to which he is gone but a short time before us. I have been tempted to wish myself in his blessed case. Grant, Lord, that my latter end may be like his. For about an hour before he resigned his soul to God, he was wholly engaged in ejaculations and prayer, and was frequently heard to repeat, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Sweet Jesus, come quickly.' A day or two since, he said to his maid, 'Do you believe in Jesus?' 'I trust I do, Sir,' answered she. 'O, but you must *believe with the heart*,' said he ; 'confessing him with the mouth is not enough. Did you ever see any person die?' On being answered in the affirmative, 'A believer,' said he, 'never dies ; he does but sleep in Jesus. I shall not die ; God has made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.' At another time he said to those about him, 'You must all come to this. You must all leave this world. O, that my death may occasion the life of many.' When he seemed to be drawing his last breath, he said, 'O, how easy it is to die ; this cannot be called dying, death has no sting, it is swallowed up in victory. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Why do thy chariot wheels tarry so long?' On being something easier, he said, 'God's will be done ; if it is his will, I would rather depart now.' The day after this he said, 'Satan has tempted me to desire I may recover, but I know I shall not ; through the power of Jesus I am come off more than conqueror.' When he was better, he desired his wife would not flatter herself, saying, 'I shall live but a

short time, and I trust you will follow me soon. Mourn not for me, mourn for yourself. I shall soon be with Jesus ;' and this morning, not long before he did go to Jesus, he said, 'I have seen things which I never saw before,' but had not strength to explain himself. He expired without a pang, and is most heartily lamented by the greatest part of this family. He will be an unspeakable loss to the parish ; but God, who has taken him, is righteous and just in all his dealings. Thy will, O, blessed Lord, be done. Our dear brother bears the blow with most Christian resignation, kissing the rod that smites. The blessed deceased shewed an uncommon affection for his master, calling often for him, and expressing the utmost gratitude for every kindness shewn him. His distressed wife, Miss Clay has taken to her house. The Lord supports her greatly in her affliction.

* * * * *

My brother is surprised you have not answered his letter. Pray do as soon as you receive this. At present I have time for no more. May the Lord be your sun and shield, and remember that your race as well as mine will soon be run.

Your most affectionate sister,

J. H.

Among the memoranda of Sir Richard Hill I find the following in reference to this event :—' Feb. 6th, 1766. This day, being Thursday, about a quarter past twelve at noon, my dear, humble, faithful servant Giles Archer sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. His disorder was a fever, which lasted exactly three weeks. The Lord enable me to follow him as he followed Christ.' In another memorandum relative to the same occurrence, he says, ' He was

about thirty-five years of age, six or seven of which he had known the grace of God in truth. He had just begun his sixth year's service with me, and I believe nothing but death could ever have parted us. I may truly say that in him I lost a judicious, valuable friend, as well as a most excellent servant. The Lord can supply his loss if he sees good.' May many learn from this example how blessed a thing it is to be endued with the grace of true piety, not only as regards our future prospects, but with reference even to the alliances of time, and the uses of this world. The letter announcing this event, reflects no small degree of credit on its pious author and her devoted brothers. It is the last of this series in my possession. It will be read with admiration by every friend of the principles it contains, and will be acceptable to all who remember with profit or respect, the long and laborious ministry of him to whom it was addressed, in times when the zeal of his youth involved him in much affliction and persecution for his Master's sake.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH. HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. RICHARD HILL. OXFORD. CONTINUATION OF LORD DARTMOUTH'S CORRESPONDENCE. NOTICES OF SEVERAL PIOUS MINISTERS. ACTIVE BENEVOLENCE OF MR. RICHARD HILL. SIR C. HOTHAM. MR. RICHARD HILL'S EXPERIENCE AND ZEAL. OXFORD IN 1767. MR. HALLWARD'S ACCOUNT.

STABILITY AND FRANKNESS OF MR. HILL.

SOME time before he wrote the admirable letters to his brothers, the agitation of Mr. Richard Hill's mind had subsided into a calm and settled enjoyment of the happiness of true religion ; and the records still remaining of his experience denote remarkable firmness of sentiment blended with deep humility. Like his brother Rowland, he never varied in the essential views of doctrine adopted in his early days, and was free from such fluctuations of religious opinion, as have distorted the understandings and impaired the usefulness of so many professing Christians in more recent times. He was naturally of a frank, confiding disposition, and delighted to open his mind to correspondents of a spirit kindred to his own, a privilege he could enjoy with very few of his own station, in days when vital piety called forth expressions of dislike scarcely credible in this century. The rancorous opposition of men of every grade to the

gospel would probably have ended in a crisis of awful darkness with all its consequences, but for the exertions and patience of the Hills and others, who, in example as well as teaching, may be truly considered as the lights of their age. Amongst these may be reckoned the generous, manly, and devoted Earl of Dartmouth. To this excellent nobleman Mr. Richard Hill unbosomed himself, with all the freedom and confidence of Christian friendship. Lord Dartmouth's house was always open to faithful ministers of Christ, nor was he ashamed to acknowledge how much he profited by the society of men whom the world nicknamed and despised. In my life of Mr. Walker of Truro, I have given several instances of his generosity and hospitality, as well as specimens of his pious correspondence. Mr. Hill fully appreciated the rare opportunity his lordship's friendship afforded him, of opening himself without reserve on religious topics, to one whose mental qualities and habits of life harmonized with his own. No letter passed between them without some allusion to those subjects which they had most at heart ; and when they met and conversed, their constant theme was the advancement of the cause of their Redeemer. The tone of feeling which pervaded both their minds, appears in the following gentlemanlike note addressed to Mr. Hill by Lord Dartmouth.

Sandwell, Aug. 25.

DEAR SIR,

I am very sorry we were not fortunate enough to be in the way when you would have made us a visit at Blackheath : it would have been a surprise, but a very agreeable one. We came hitherto yesterday, and I have brought with me two copies of Mr. Venn's sermons,

which you commissioned me to procure for you. I shall be very glad to know by what method I may convey them to you. I heartily wish you a daily increase of every gospel grace and blessing, that you may flourish in the garden of God like a tree planted by the rivers of waters, till you are removed to that state where hope and faith shall be done away, and love be all in all. Lady D. is yours. I am, dear Sir,

Your affectionate servant and friend,

D.

Expressions of this kind were sure to be met by the sneers and contempt of most of the laity, and what is still more awful, by the virulent opposition of great numbers of the clergy in those days of darkness. It is this which gives value to every memorial of the manly piety of Lord Dartmouth, whose honest zeal and self-denial were accompanied by a uniform spirit of Christian cheerfulness. He had, however, felt the power of the grace of God, and saw that preaching morality instead of Christ, would never stem the current of wickedness that broke through every bound, and flooded the land. Accordingly, he conceived it was his duty to support by the whole force of his influence, those ministers who revived the forgotten doctrines of the Reformation, and taught them to their hearers.

About the year 1761, considerable efforts were made by certain zealous members of the University of Oxford, and Lord Dartmouth, as well as Mr. Richard Hill, took a lively interest in their success. Among the most conspicuous promoters of revival there, were two friends of Mr. Walker of Truro, Mr. Haweis and Mr. Jones. Their exertions were much opposed, but not with that violence which marked the proceedings against certain

students a few years later, as will hereafter appear in the pages of this volume. As every thing that tends to throw any light on the progress of evangelical religion in England is important, I insert here a letter to Mr. Richard Hill, from his noble friend, which alludes to a demonstration made against the active Oxonians, and is also characteristic of its writer.

DEAR MR. HILL,

Herewith I send your watch, which I received from Mr. Mudge the day before I left Blackheath. We came hither last week, and are all in good health. I rejoice with you that Baron Smythe is to come our circuit. As soon as I know what day the assizes will be at Shrewsbury, I shall with great pleasure fix my time for waiting upon you, of which I will give you previous notice. I suppose you may have heard something of the arbitrary proceedings at Oxford; they are too long to relate here, besides which I should do it very imperfectly, though I have had the whole relation from Mr. Talbot.¹ Nothing can be more unjust or cruel. The affair is by no means at an end, Mr. T. having given the bishop a bone to pick, by desiring his lordship to license him to Mr. Jones's curacy in the room of Mr. Haweis. His lordship's answer is to be given to-day; and Mr. T. if he should be rejected, as is most probable, is determined to lay the whole matter before the public. Jones is gone to take possession of an inheritance that fadeth not away.

Here I was interrupted by the arrival of your letter, which anticipates the pleasure I expected in hearing of

¹ Rector of Kington. For an account of his character and ministry, I beg to refer the reader to my *Life of Mr. Walker of Truro*.

your health by the return of my messenger. Lady Smythe will be here about the middle of next month, and wait for the baron, who has promised to give us the pleasure of his company after the circuit. I suppose I shall be with you early in the month of August. It will be a great disappointment to me if your sheriff should not be returned home at that time, though I suppose his office will make his presence necessary if it be possible. I fancy the reason of your not having received the parcel of books, is that Mr. Broughton has forgot them : the case has happened to myself. I shall deliver your message to Mr. Stillingfleet in a few minutes.

Mr. Stillingfleet sends you his compliments. He apprehends from Mr. Clements's letter that he does not intend to have a curate at present ; if he hears anything further from Mr. Clements, he will let you know. The *branches* are much obliged to you, or I for them : they are all perfectly well. If in any future letter I should make no mention of them, I hope you will take it for granted without being affronted, that they are well.

Sincerely yours,

[*Sandwell*] June 25.

D.

Mr. Stillingfleet, mentioned here by Lord Dartmouth, was the pious editor of the *Sermons* by Mr. Walker of Truro, on the Church Catechism, to which he prefixed a judicious notice of his life and ministry. He was an excellent and devoted man, held in high esteem by many who knew his modesty and worth. The Bishop refused to license Mr. Talbot to the curacy vacated by Mr. Haweis. His conduct affords another proof of the violent animosity which existed in those times, against the teachers of *evangelical* doctrines. The occurrence drew from Lord Dartmouth some very

appropriate observations in a letter to Mr. Hill, which is as follows.

Sandwell, July 6, 1762.

DEAR MR. HILL,

The time of your assizes being fixed for the fourth of next month, I propose to wait upon you on Monday the second. I think to dine at Newport, from whence I can be with you early in the afternoon. You misunderstood what I said of Lady Smythe in my last ; she has no thoughts of being at Salop, but is to wait here for the baron, whom we are to see upon his return from the circuit. It seems very probable that the affair concerning our friend Haweis¹ will make some noise in the world. You have heard, I suppose, that Mr. T[albo]t offered himself to the bishop for a licence to succeed Mr. H. ; it has been refused, and T[albo]t has been in London to consult his friends. What determination he has come to, I have not yet heard. I believe he intends to make the matter public. It is doubted by some whether the bishop has not gone beyond his legal authority already, and whether a question of very extensive importance is not likely to arise upon it. Whatever be the issue, my greatest concern is that nothing be done on the part of our friends, but with the most Christian meekness and patience, and forbearance ; and then I trust we shall not be ashamed to own their cause, and to support them with undaunted fortitude. I hope to hear from or to see Mr. T[albo]t very soon. Lady D. sends you her best respects. I am, dear Sir,

With true affection, yours,

N. B. The children are well.

D.

¹ The afterwards well-known Dr. Haweis.

How this affair at Oxford ended, I have no information ; but the observations made on it by Lord Dartmouth, afford a pleasing proof of his judgment, charity, and sincerity. It has been usual to accuse the zealous men of the Church in his time of imprudence and haste ; but the more their conduct is investigated, the more clearly will it appear that like Him whom they served, *they were hated without a cause.*

Mr. Richard Hill was one of the few who knew how to value the writings of Lord Dartmouth's dear friend Mr. Walker of Truro ; and I have given in my Life of that great and good man, some extracts from his lordship's letters to him respecting his illness and death. Having both profited by his admirable sermons, they were anxious to circulate them as widely as possible ; and in this design, as will appear in the next letter, they were seconded by others who attached an equal value to these productions, the scriptural accuracy and sound reasoning of which have never been surpassed.

London, Nov. 26, 1764.

MY DEAR MR. HILL,

In the first place, I am sure you will be glad to hear that we are all got safe to town, and in the next, that I have executed all your commissions. Mr. Talbot has no objection to your design of publishing more of Mr. Walker's sermons, and is ready to undertake the revisal of them, whenever the copies are transmitted to him. Mrs. S. seems to be of opinion that the sets you have mentioned will hardly be sufficient to furnish two volumes, and if so, she has several single sermons, out of which some may be chosen to make up the necessary number. I delivered your message also to James Stil-

lingfleet, and gave him the book which he promised to put into the hands of Mr. Hermer, and to engage him upon the subjects mentioned in Mr. Berkeley's letter; but in all probability Mr. Berkeley has already satisfied himself, for Mr. Hermer was gone to Bray to him, at the time that I was speaking to Mr. Stillingfleet.

Mr. —, Mrs. Knipe, and others of your good friends whose faces are usually [visible at] the Lock, are in good health. Yesterday, we had an excellent sermon there from Mr. Romaine, from these words, "Adam, where art thou?" which spiritually understood as relating to the state and condition of the soul, is the question that God is always asking by his word of every soul of man. In enlarging upon them, he laid open the nature of that state into which Adam and all his posterity fell, as a state of *ignorance*, *guilt*, and *corruption*, and of the image of God, after which believers are renewed in *knowledge*, *righteousness*, and true *holiness*, in a very heart-searching and edifying manner. In the afternoon, Mr. Downing gave us a very good discourse on Christ's last legacy to his disciples: "peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, &c." May the same sweet peace, the only source of comfort and joy be shed abroad abundantly in your heart and mine, and those of all our dear friends. Lady D. desires to be remembered to you and yours. I am, my dear Sir,

Most affectionately yours,

D.

Occasionally, letters of a more intimate character passed between these pious correspondents, as the following extract from a letter of Mr. Richard Hill will prove. He thus communicated his state of mind to Lord Dart-

mouth :—“ I bless God that my bodily health is very good, and that I am, and have been for some time past, extremely happy in my soul. A sweet peace and joy in believing, a peace which passeth all understanding, is shed abroad in my heart. Christ is daily more and more precious, prayer and the word more and more delightful, and sin more and more odious. O that I were entirely free from the lustings and indwellings of this horrible monster, which is insinuating itself into all that I do, even my very best duties, and which is the only thing in the world that is not of God’s making. But these I know I never shall be freed from so long as I abide in the body, and carry about with me the remains of a corrupt nature. This often makes me groan, being burdened, and long to be dissolved and be with Christ. But yet even my corruptions have this blessed effect, that seeing and feeling my own weakness and insufficiency, I am driven out of myself to Him in whom all fullness dwells—wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The Psalms of David have of late been peculiarly sweet to me, and the promises therein contained have refreshed me as the richest cordials. In whatsoever of his offices I view the Redeemer, I see that he is exactly suited to me as a guilty, helpless sinner, and that he is altogether lovely and the chief among ten thousand. And whilst the Spirit according to the promise (John xvi. 14) thus takes of the things of Christ and shews them unto me, I cannot but loathe and abhor myself in dust and ashes ; yea, the tears of love and wonder are ready to start from my eyes to think of this amazing love and goodness to me, even to me, the chief of sinners. In short, I am enabled to live much more by faith on the finished salvation that is in Christ, than I used to do. I know whom I have believed, and that he

is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day. O, what a sweet life is the life of a believer in Jesus. Well may the Apostle call it 'a life hid with Christ in God;' for, as the world loveth him not, so it knoweth him not; but he hath meat to eat which the world knoweth not of, and joys with which a stranger intermeddleth not. The secret of the Lord is with him. He is possessed of that pearl of great price, that white stone on which a new name is written, which none know but they who receive it, even they whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

"But how comes it to pass, that though it is now about seven years since God was pleased to discover to me the misery of my state by nature, and the necessity of being made a new creature in Christ Jesus, that my soul was long kept in leanness and bondage, bowed down under accusations of conscience and continual fear of death? The reason now appears to me most plain. It was owing to a legal self-righteous spirit which lurked unsuspected in my heart, whereby the actings of faith were obstructed, and I was prevented from enjoying that glorious liberty with which he whom the Son makes free, shall be free indeed. But this has been an excellent lesson to me, as it hath more fully convinced me that the first step to true faith must begin with a conviction of unbelief, according to John xvi. 8, 9—that this faith is an inward, divine, living principle, the gift of God, and the work of his Spirit in the heart, and is as different from that poor notional thing which generally passes for faith in the world, and is the mere effect of custom and education, as light is different from darkness; and that where the foundation has not been thus deeply laid in conviction of sin and unbelief, no external duty or regularity in conduct can be true conversion, since all proceeds

from a wrong principle, and only tends to bolster up the soul in self-deceit and estrange it farther from God."

This letter bears no date in Mr. Hill's copy, from which it is taken, nor does a letter from Lord Dartmouth in his own hand-writing, which seems to be a reply to it. It is either an answer to this, or his Lordship had been consulted by Mr. Hill respecting the account of his conversion and experience, included in the first chapter. Whether it alludes to one or the other is of no consequence; it is a proof of their Christian intercourse, and of the basis on which their friendship rested.

MY DEAR MR. HILL,

As often as you have any such accounts to give of the experience of a soul made subject to the power of divine grace, any such indisputable instances to produce of the Holy Spirit's agency upon the soul during its abode in the flesh, your time cannot be thrown away in committing it to paper, both for the satisfaction of your friends and the benefit of those who may be inclined to dispute the reality of such communications. In return, I can send nothing more agreeable to you, than that I left our friends in Yorkshire well the beginning of last week. Mr. — was there; he had lately been a progress with Mr. Venn into the northern parts of the county, where they saw nothing that gave them so much delight as did the company and conversation of Mr. Conyers, Minister of Helmsley, of whose uncommon zeal and extraordinary love to the people who have been converted under him, they give a wonderful account. 'You,' says Mr. Venn, 'who are a husband and a father, may know something of the love that he bears to his

people, by what you feel towards your wife and children.' Till these gentlemen came within his doors, he had never seen the face of a Gospel minister, nor heard a Gospel sermon, but from a curate whom he has himself instructed, and to whom his instructions have been blessed. You may guess, then, what was his rapture at the sight of them. He accosted them in the most devout and serious manner, with 'blessed be my God that hath sent you to me: who am I that I should be thus highly favoured?' Mr. Venn he had corresponded with, but such was his retirement from the converse of the world, that he had not so much as heard of Mr. — till very lately. The great man of his parish is Mr. Duncombe, who is extremely kind to him, though not yet himself effectually persuaded of the necessity of placing his happiness in things unseen and eternal. There seems, however, to be room for hope both of him and Lady Die. They both attended the Lock Chapel last winter, and brought Mr. Conyers Mr. —'s hymns to teach his people. Mr. Venn inquired much after you, and wished I could have persuaded you to have taken the journey with me. Indeed your time would not have been thrown away. Besides the two gentlemen I have mentioned, I saw six others equally distinguished by the grace which God has been pleased to bestow upon them. Their names¹ are Richardson, Furley, Burnet, Adam, Ingham, and Clarke, late Curate at Amersham, and Caton's friend. I could name three or four more not far distant from them. How is that county blessed with faithful laborers. Mr. Stillingfleet set out the beginning of this week upon a very long journey, even to Truro, where he cannot fail to receive both delight and benefit from the

¹ Another proof of what I have often asserted, that the number of evangelical *regulars* in those days has been underrated.

conversation of dear Mr. Walker's spiritual children, who continue, I hear, to adorn their profession. A letter of yours for him has been brought to me, and I have sent it forward. Be assured, my dear Mr. Hill, that I shall be extremely glad to see both you and Mr. Tudway in your way to London. At the time you mention, it is highly probable we shall be quite alone. On my return from Yorkshire, at Lichfield, I had the unexpected pleasure of meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Powys. They were coming to Birmingham, and brought me a few miles in their coach. I should have persuaded them to have made this their inn, had not Lord and Lady Willoughby been here. Lady D. and the fireside are well, and desire to be remembered. My best respects attend the family at Hawkstone. I am, dear Sir, with unfeigned affection,

Yours, in the bonds, I trust, of Christian love,

D.

These letters unquestionably convey assurance of the piety of their two estimable writers. The temperament of Mr. Hill was far more sanguine than that of his noble correspondent, but they were both equally desirous of giving every possible encouragement to the zeal for the gospel, which was now beginning to manifest itself around them. Yorkshire was indeed highly favoured; and the half dozen names mentioned in Lord Dartmouth's letter, include three of eminent and well-known piety. Mr. Richardson was a most efficient clergyman, and is the author of some valuable remarks on the career of Mr. Walker, of Truro, published by way of preface to the letters of that eminent minister, sent by him some years ago to the *Christian Observer*.¹ The characters of Mr. Adam, whose *Private Thoughts* are so well known to the

¹ See *Christian Observer*, 1802.

Christian world, and of his friend Mr. Burnet, Mr. Venn's¹ pious Curate at Huddersfield, have often been of late brought before the public. Mr. Adam and he were much attached to each other, and their mutual regard was cemented by Mr. Walker, who held Mr. Burnet and his young associate, Mr. Haweis, afterwards the celebrated chaplain of Lady Huntingdon, in the highest esteem. Mr. Adam was reported to have been deeply imbued with sentiments bordering on what is called the highest *high* Calvinism. Nay, Wesley declared them to be 'the essence of Antinomianism,' and observed, that he did not wonder at his rod not blossoming—alluding to his want of success in his parish at Wintringham. An authentic anecdote, however, utterly refutes this rumour. Once, when he was very ill, Mr. Burnet went to Wintringham on purpose to see him, and found him confined to his bed. He inquired as to his feelings at the apparent nearness of death, upon which Mr. Adam replied, that he was not without comfort; 'but how,' said he, 'should I feel at this moment if I believed that there was a decree against me?' There certainly was no good ground for what was imputed to him by J. Wesley, who was too ready to give the same opinion of all who opposed his schemes of separation and lay-preaching.

Mr. Burnet was a man of a very tender, conscientious spirit, which he carried almost to an extreme, yet it was an extreme much to be admired. An instance of it occurred one day as he was riding with Mr. Richardson and another friend, in the neighbourhood of York. When they came near a turnpike gate, a few miles from the city, they turned their horses round with a view of

¹ See the Life of Mr. Venn. Also Westoby's Memoir of Mr. Adam.

proceeding home. Mr. Burnet rode up to Mr. Richardson, and said with a very serious air, 'Do you think now, that it is right to have used so much of the road without paying the toll?' Whatever may be thought of this story, it should serve to awaken in the minds of inconsistent professors of religion, a proper inquiry as to the effect of conscience upon all their actions, and the duty of letting their light shine before men. The Church of Christ can never suffer so much from the storm without, as by the disfiguring smoke within, from the oil of lamp-bearers which burns not clearly and brightly.¹

The period to which the correspondence of Lord Dartmouth and Mr. Hill referred, was one of the most remarkable in our religious history, and to those who know how to appreciate it, every monument thereof is precious. An age of a similar kind will not return again, nor men like the revivalists who were formed by it, and whose frequent singularity of manner arose out of the circumstances in which they were involved. We shall see no more patrons of devoted men similarly circumstanced with the two now before us, nor any more such instruments as Wesley, Whitfield, Romaine, Berridge, &c., with all their characteristic peculiarities, both of thought and action. But, notwithstanding their various eccentricities, we owe them an eternal debt of gratitude; and above all to those *regular* clergymen who, though fervent in spirit, checked a reckless deviation from rule that would soon have ended in wild disorder. Yet we must be

¹ A lady, once much prejudiced against a particular ministry, became greatly devoted to it, and died rejoicing in what she had learned of her Redeemer. A friend, who knew her former sentiments, asked her, 'Were your prejudices removed by your minister's *preaching*?' 'Partly,' she answered, 'but by observing his *life* more.' We have a lesson here.

gentle in our censure of any Christians who helped to lead the ignorant to the Saviour of souls. Blessed also is the memory of the men whose situation gave them the power, and whose piety begat the inclination, to support their endeavours at a time when to honour Christ and his word, was to forfeit the esteem and approbation of the mass of society, high and low. It was of these excellent but rare persons, and with particular allusion to Lord Dartmouth, that Cowper says—

We boast some rich ones whom the Gospel sways,
And one who wears a coronet and prays ;
Like gleanings of an olive-tree they show,
Here and there one upon the topmost bough.

How different our own highly-favoured days—days that will be brighter still, when our moral atmosphere is cleared of the many vapours that will melt away as the sun of truth approaches nearer its meridian glory.

Lord Dartmouth and his friend, Lord Chief Baron Smythe, were amongst the earliest supporters of evangelical preaching at the Lock Chapel, for which they were much sneered at. But George III. and his Queen knew how to set a right value upon Lord Dartmouth's character. Her Majesty called him 'one of the best of men;' and the King, in a well-known conversation with Dr. Beattie, observed, 'They call his Lordship an *enthusiast*; but surely he says nothing on the subject of religion but what any Christian may and *ought* to say.' Such were the opinions of these illustrious personages, who had the gift of discerning the worth of true piety through all the prejudices which the world cast around it. Whitfield also paid a just tribute to his Lordship's liberal support of the College for American Indians.

Such was the distinguished confidant of Mr. Richard

Hill, whose private virtues and public spirit were in every way worthy of his noble friend's regard. His active benevolence appears in various memoranda among his papers. The following are specimens :

“ July 1765. Margaret Rolls, one of my pensioners died, aged between eighty and ninety. About the same time died the widow Griffith, another of my poor pensioners, nearly the same age.”

“ The clerk of Weston's widow, Ann Gittens, died Sept. 1765, about the same age, another pensioner. Her husband died about two years before, aged between ninety and a hundred.”

They were privileged at that time with the gospel in the parish where Mr. Richard Hill lived, as I gather from another record, though I never heard Mr. Rowland Hill mention it, nor any other person.

“ July 13, 1766. The Rev. Mr. Dicken, curate of this parish, departed this life by a jaundice and dropsy. He had been curate above twenty years, five of which he preached the glorious gospel of Christ.”

These simple memoranda bespeak the character of the man who made them, and need no remark of mine.

Amongst these notices of events, I find, Oct. 26, 1767, “ Received a letter with the news of Sir Charles Hotham's being gone to his everlasting rest. A great man indeed is fallen in Israel, but the Lord has all hearts in his hand, and can easily make up the loss to his Church and people ; or otherwise, he will shew them that he can carry on his work without any earthly helps. Lord, prepare me for the important hour : keep me always with my lamp trimmed and my oil burning.” Sir Charles Hotham was an indirect fruit of Whitfield's ministry at Bath, where he often preached at the house of Lady Gertrude Hotham, the sister of Lord Chester-

field. Her ladyship's eldest daughter was one of his converts there, and Whitfield himself never described a more touching and triumphant scene than that of his last interview with her, when she lay in the prime of her earthly days, upon her dying bed. But Sir Charles heard in vain, till it pleased God to make the loss of his lady the salvation of his soul. He went down sorrowing to the grave, though the good king appointed him to an office about his majesty's person. His afflicted mother was soon after burnt to death. So dreadful were her sufferings that the surgeon who dressed her wounds, in his ignorance told her she *deserved* heaven for her wonderful patience. But she pleaded like a true Christian, the alone blood and righteousness of the Lamb, and warned the poor flatterer of his own danger. Thus does a mysterious but wise Providence frequently ripen his loveliest fruits for the eternal garner.

Although the ministry of Whitfield and the career of Lady Huntingdon had excited the curiosity, and impressed in some degree the minds of many persons of distinction at this period, yet there never was a time in which vital godliness was more hated and opposed by the higher classes, who were generally in a state of appalling ignorance respecting the plainest truths of the Bible, and condemned as *Methodists* all ministers who even named the name of Christ in their sermons. It is reported of one worldly clergyman, that he thought it necessary to make an apology for *preaching Christ* on Christmas-day, assuring his audience at the same time, that he had done with the subject till the same festival came round again another year! The consequence of this was, that those members of noble and wealthy families who had experienced the blessedness of true piety, were obliged to encourage each other in bearing the ob-

loquy to which their religion exposed them, and to endeavour by a lively spiritual intercourse, to keep up the tone of godliness amongst themselves. By the help of God they abundantly succeeded, and were the means of laying the foundations of those bulwarks of our nation, which we now possess in the many noble families devoted to the truth. The mind of Mr. Richard Hill seemed to gather daily firmness of principle and fixedness of purpose. He wrote among the memoranda of his own experience, "I think I may safely hope that the Lord vouchsafes me more power over sin, and that the law in my mind does bring the law in my members more into subjection. But still I have reason to say, 'O wretched man that I am, &c.' I know my heart is very deceitful, but I think I may safely say the one abiding, reigning desire thereof, is to be wholly devoted to God in Christ, to be more active and useful in his service, to promote his blessed cause in my generation, whatever opposition I may meet with for so doing, to be more crucified to the world, more self-mortified, and self-denied: in a word, to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." He had his share of trials from his family connections and the world, but observes, "It is a blessed thing to be able to leave all our concerns in God's hands, and to see with the eye of faith that every cross, trial, and affliction, and dispensation, is appointed of God, and will continue or be removed from the believer, as shall be most for the Lord's glory and the good of the believer's soul. Unbelief embitters all. Faith sweetens all. Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. Let me be anxious for nothing, but in every thing let me follow the leadings of thy word, Spirit, and providence." Again he says, "It is upwards of seven years that I

have been endeavouring to understand the meaning of that promise, 'Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.' I bless God that I do in some measure know and feel its import, though I always have had, and always shall have need to say, 'not as though I had already attained.' It is a great thing to live abidingly by the faith of the Son of God." Such sentiments could not fail to develop themselves in a career of energetic exertion, which he felt to be the more called for by the deplorable condition of all classes of people as regarded religion. Hence he sought every possible occasion by which he could be made an instrument of infusing even the smallest portion of the true leaven into a mass so dead and hardened; and there is no doubt that his embracing many opportunities of preaching, the mistake of which step he fully saw in after life, was caused by the purest spirit of zeal and philanthropy. Indeed in his earlier days, he was persuaded to discontinue it for a time, and was induced by his father to go and try to bring home his brother Rowland from his itinerant course. He met with him at Kingswood near Bristol, surrounded by a throng of colliers, upon whom a most powerful appeal from the lips of the young preacher, had produced a wonderful effect. He drew near the multitude and mingled with them, waiting to speak to his brother when the sermon ended. But the scene was too much for him, and quickly wrought upon the sensibility of his tender and excitable heart. He saw the traces of tears upon the black faces of the colliers, and his own soon flowed as he caught the spirit of the stirring moment. Young Rowland's eye was upon him; and with that quickness which distinguished him throughout his life, saw that he had gained him to his cause. He did not hesitate for a moment, but gave

out instantly that Richard Hill, Esquire, would preach at a certain time and place which he named, and succeeded in prevailing on him to fulfil the announcement. This occurrence was hailed with delight by Berridge and others, and drew from them many triumphant remarks, characterised by much more of heated zeal than of sober Christian prudence, which calculates wisely the aggregate of a man's usefulness in his peculiar station, and desires that he should shine in the sphere wherein Providence has ordained and pointed out his movements. This event happened a short time after the period to which our attention is now more particularly directed, and is merely related here as being a convenient place for the brief digression.

About the year 1767, Mr. Richard Hill began to take a lively interest in the efforts to promote the cause of truth at Oxford, which had grown out of those adverted to at the beginning of this chapter. He was the more in earnest because men of authority in the University, had manifested a decided intention to put down every attempt of the kind, and the authors of it. The person from whom both Mr. Richard and Mr. Rowland Hill derived their chief information respecting these movements, was Mr. John Hallward, an Oxonian, of whom more will be said in a future part of this volume. There are in my possession several of his letters to his young friend Rowland Hill at Cambridge, which give a most valuable insight into the beginning of that opposition, which broke forth with such violence in 1768. Mr. Hallward, filled with youthful zeal, had begun preaching prematurely under the auspices of Mr. Richard Hill at Hodnet, who, when his fidelity at Reading in after life, involved him in persecution, became his powerful defender. He was in constant correspondence with young Rowland,

and in common with him, had to encounter much parental opposition. In one letter, Mr. Hallward tells him : “ My parents have got in their possession several of the letters and papers wrote from the beginning of my conversion, and received from Mr. Davies, Riland, &c. containing *the quintessence of enthusiasm and Methodism*, so called. You may well imagine the devil would represent this as a terrible affair, and indeed well know the effects he would have it produce ; but thanks to God, I am kept, and have been calm and tranquil.” He announced in this communication dated, Feb. 1767, that he should soon “ be at Oxon.” When there, he with some others of a kindred spirit, met at the house of a Mrs. Durbridge for the purpose of religious exercises. These pious youths had been visited during their meetings by Mr. Richard Hill, as appears in the following extract from a letter of Mr. Hallward to his brother Rowland, dated “ Worcester, Aug. 18, 1767.” He says, “ I had left Oxon sooner, but that I chose to stay there, it being at my own option, till the devil had broke up the rout and convocation of horse-racers, &c., here assembled, and pretty well despatched and finished those horrible works of darkness. I had the pleasure of seeing your dear brother and *rector* before I came down, and likewise of hearing, with many others, a very sweet and excellent sermon from him on the Sunday evening at Mrs. D’s. There dropt in two or three gownsmen whilst he was preaching, who the next Sunday came in just before prayer, with about eight or nine more, when a sermon was read. As many or more came the next, when a gospel minister providentially came in, and that evening, and in the morning, much refreshed our bowels in the Lord by the gracious words that dropt from his lips, both in preaching and conversation. This discovery,

with that of the Newnam or village affair I mentioned before, has made a very great stir, so that the people of Oxford, both Gown and Town, begin now more than ever to cry out and make a great noise. They were before ignorant of our carrying on that meeting there, and on their coming in, I thought it cowardly to desist." News was constantly transmitted of all these events to Mr. Richard Hill; and on one occasion Mr. Stillingfleet, who had been at Oxford, brought tidings of symptoms of great indignation in very high quarters. The case of one youth was actually brought before the Archbishop of Canterbury, his own father turning complainant—a specimen indeed of the virulence of the times against any approach to spiritual religion. The Archbishop replied that he was "sorry for them both," and thought "the youth might be brought to himself by his father's kind admonitions, instructions, &c." At the same time the Bishop of Oxford protested against the *Methodists*, and a faithful *Address to the Clergy* dedicated to him. He also sent down an address of his own, wherein he accused the revivalists of schism, and Antinomianism. He was urged on by his chaplain, one Wheeler, who declared his determination "to purge the University of the old leaven," as he was pleased to term the zealous Christians there. The young man just mentioned was obliged to leave Oxford, and announced himself as "beset on every side—could return no more to Oxon—knew not what door the Lord might open—but was quite resigned;" and notwithstanding all his difficulties, was determined not to have recourse to the common cure for all these troubles in those days, "housing himself in a meeting-house," contrary to the discipline of that Church whose doctrines he was so anxious once

more to revive. In spite of all the uproar raised, “ the number of candidates for the vineyard ” at Oxford increased more and more, until the enemy interrupted them in their labours by an act of most disgraceful violence. The history of this persecution will be given in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

CHARGES AGAINST CERTAIN STUDENTS OF ST. EDMUND'S HALL, OXFORD, WHO WERE EXPELLED. EXCELLENT LETTER OF MR. RICHARD HILL. THEIR DEFENCE BY HIM AND MR. WHITFIELD. DR. NOWELL'S REPLY TO MR. HILL'S "PIETAS OXONIENSIS." FAULTS OF THE LATTER WORK. ARTICLES OF ACCUSATION BY MR. HIGSON. THE SENTENCE. CASE OF WELLINO. "GOLIATH SLAIN." THE NEWSPAPERS. THE PROCTORS. REMARKS.

OXFORD, 1768.

IN the year 1768, the "stir and noise" of the preceding year assumed a determinate form, and distinct charges were made against the young revivalists at Oxford. The originator of the various accusations brought before the authorities, was a Mr. Higson, tutor of St. Edmund's Hall, and the persons accused were six students of his own College. This individual professed a sudden alarm at discovering that there were in that society "several enthusiasts," who ventured to talk "of regeneration, inspiration, and drawing nigh unto God!" In a state of great ignorance, or at least forgetfulness, of the prominence of these terms in the Book of Common Prayer, he went, apparently much excited, with the charge now mentioned, to Dr. Dixon the Principal, who quietly observed that he could see no cause to consider these gen-

clermen as enthusiasts, for having adopted expressions that were Scriptural and authorized by the offices of our own Church. Mr. Higson was much dissatisfied with the answer of Dr. Dixon, and determined to proceed further against the youths whose opinions he had denounced in vain to the head of his own hall. How far he was an instrument in the hands of others does not fully appear, but it is very certain that his efforts were acceptable to men of high station at Oxford. He began to make most assiduous inquiries relative to the objects of his complaint, and at length brought distinct articles of accusation against six of his pupils, named James Matthews, Thomas Jones, Joseph Shipman, Benjamin Kay, Erasmus Middleton,¹ and Thomas Grove. The charges were heard before the Vice-Chancellor and his Assessors. Their names were David Durell, D.D., Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, and Visitor of St. Edmund Hall; Thomas Randolph, D.D., President of Corpus Christi College; Thomas Fothergill, D.D., Provost of Queen's College; Thomas Nowell, D.D., Principal of St. Mary's Hall, and the Rev. Thomas Atterbury, A.M., of Christ Church, at that time Senior Proctor. These gentlemen having heard the evidence brought before them, declared the six students to have been guilty of "crimes" worthy of expulsion, and thereupon the Vice-Chancellor pronounced sentence that they be *expelled*. There can be no question, and it is only fair to admit it in the outset, that these young men had in some degree deviated from the course prescribed by the Statutes of the University, but not in a way, except for the hatred then prevalent of spiritual religion under any form, that could have brought on them more than an admonition from their superiors.

¹ Afterwards Curate to Messrs. Romaine and Cadogan, and author of the "Biographia Evangelica."

This the history of the case will prove. No event of the day produced a stronger sensation, and never was such a string of accusations before exhibited to the world, to excite surprise and indignation. Before these are alluded to, it is proper to mention that they were accused, in addition to religious irregularities, of disobedience to the authority of Mr. Higson, their tutor. They were, however, fully acquitted of this in the eyes of their Principal, Dr. Dixon, who spoke of them in the highest terms before the Vice-Chancellor and his Assessors, and afterwards assured Mr. Richard Hill in private, that he "never remembered in his own, or in any other College, six youths whose lives were so exemplary, and who behaved themselves in a more humble, regular, peaceable manner." A declaration to this effect from such a quarter, plainly proves that the disobedience to their tutor was not a little exaggerated. All their actions were distorted and magnified into monstrosities, by being viewed through the medium of prejudice against their piety.

Just previous to their trial, and ten days before the sentence of expulsion was pronounced, Mr. Richard Hill wrote in the following terms to Mr. Jones. A portion of this letter remains among his papers, and is called by him "Part of my letter to Mr. Jones, before his expulsion from the University of Oxford for the *sin* of praying." The letter itself is extremely creditable to his judgment.

Wigmore-street, March 1, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter, together with that of Dr. Dixon to Mr. Middleton, came to hand last night. As I know Mr. Middleton intended I should see the Doctor's letter, I ventured to open it, and to communicate the contents

of it to Lord Dartmouth, who joins with me in the entire approbation of Doctor Dixon's sentiments and advice, and in the propriety there would have been in shewing it to the Archbishop, in case Mr. Middleton had offered himself for ordination ; but that design upon the most mature deliberation being laid aside for the present, I have enclosed the letter to you, and desire you will give it to Mr. Middleton. With regard to yourself, let me entreat you by no means to desert your post, but keep in the way of duty, and look up by faith and prayer to Him whose cause it is for which you are called in question, and who is engaged to make all things work together for good to his church and people. The Act of Parliament, the Canon, and University Statute against Conventicles, were originally compiled to prevent seditious assemblies against the Church or State by Papists, or other Dissenters from the Establishment, as the Preamble prefixed to the Act of Parliament, and the words of the Statute and Canon do fully evince ; but none of them do give the least prohibition to members of the Church of England to assemble in private houses, or any other places for the purposes of prayer, expounding, religious conversation, or any other means of mutual edification which are not contrary to the doctrine, peace, and discipline of the Church. Nay, so far from it, that Mr. Robert Nelson, author of the *Fasts and Festivals*, (than whom there never was a stronger churchman or more exact disciplinarian), by the approbation of the greatest dignitaries in divinity, himself established many meetings and societies of this sort, an account of which may be seen in Dr. Woodward's book of these *Societies*, which I will endeavour to get and send to you in a few days ; and indeed the very nature of the thing is the fullest proof of its reasonableness, for what sort of a church must that needs

be, which, under the notion of an illicit assembling, would forbid its members from joining together in prayer, reading the word, or even speaking of what concerns their immortal souls? Now, therefore, before you can come under the censure of the Act of Parliament, the Canon, or Statute, it must be proved (at least it ought to be so) that you are dissenters from the doctrines or discipline of the Established Church, or disturbers of the public peace. But that you are faithfully attached to the former, the subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles at your matriculation, and your present willingness to abide by that subscription, do testify; and your ready acquiescence in attending the stated worship of the Church of England, and your desire of being a regularly-ordained minister in that establishment, are the most evident demonstrations of your being well-affected to her discipline; and if you are deemed disturbers of the public peace because you have met a few friends to pray for the welfare of the University, and a plentiful increase of the kingdom of the Prince of Peace within the pale of that church which is established among us, viz., in the pure Apostolical Church of England, then, I say, upon what a sandy foundation must she stand, if her sons are prohibited to build one another up in their most holy faith, or to join in prayer for her prosperity at any other time than when they are within her walls! What a reflection would it cast upon the wisdom of our pious ancestors, to suppose they could compile a statute which should lay every good Christian under such a dreadful restriction. But if every meeting for a religious purpose among members of the Established Church, should be construed in the light of a conventicle, and if your superiors and seniors in the University should think proper to lay their injunctions upon you not to meet any of the towns-people again,

then I would submit to their authority, and tell them that what you did before was done without the least design of offending against the public peace, and the doctrine or discipline of the Church. As to what is urged against Mr. Middleton before he was a member of the University, and consequently not subject to the statutes, I think it cannot affect him any more than what it did twenty years before, yet I hope he will freely acknowledge his error, and declare his future intention of regularity."

The expulsion of these six young men took place on the eleventh of March, 1768, and early in the following April, Mr. Whitfield printed a letter on the subject, addressed to the Vice-Chancellor; and in June, Mr. Richard Hill published his pamphlet, called *Pietas Oxoniensis*. Whitfield told Dr. Durell plainly, that whatever pretences may have been made for the sentence passed, "such as disqualification in respect to learning, age, being of trades,¹ &c. &c. (*nugæ tricæque calendæ*), it is notorious and obvious to all intelligent persons, that the grand cause of these young men's expulsion was this, namely, that they were either real or reputed *Methodists*." "But," after a few more pointed observations, he proceeds, "lest any more innocent youths should hereafter suffer barely for the imputation of a nick-name, give me leave simply and honestly to inform you, Reverend Sir, and through you the whole University, what not barely a reputed, but a real Methodist is. 'He is one of those whom God hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels

¹ It will shortly appear that these were amongst the charges alleged against them.

made to honour. Wherefore they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season: they through grace obey the calling: they be justified freely, they be made the sons of God by adoption: they be made like the image of his only begotten son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works; and at length by God's mercy, they attain everlasting felicity! This is the true portraiture of a Methodist, drawn at full length, drawn to the very life, and that, too, not by an ignorant modern dauber, but by those good old skilful Scriptural limners, Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, in the seventeenth Article of our Church." To this he adds, "If you should desire, Reverend Sir, a definition of Methodism itself, as well as of a Methodist, you may easily be gratified. It is no more nor less than faith working by love—a holy method of living and dying to the glory of God. It is a universal morality, founded upon the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost: or, to keep the exact terms made use of in the last collect of our excellent Liturgy, it is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, which we cannot go to church or chapel on Sundays, holidays, or other common days without praying, not that it may be driven from, but *be with* us all evermore." With peculiar acuteness he also argued, "If such proceedings be continued, which God forbid, what little credit may we suppose will hereafter be given to future University testimonials, namely, that the bearers of them have behaved studiously, soberly, and *piously*; and how must we in time be put under a disagreeable necessity of having a new, or at least altering some part of our most excellent ordination office? As it now stands, one of the questions proposed to every

candidate for holy orders runs thus, ‘Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost?’—but if all students are to be expelled that sing hymns, pray extempore, attend upon, or expound a verse now and then in, a religious Church of England Society, should it not rather, Reverend Sir, be worded thus, namely, ‘Do ye trust that ye are *not* inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the office and administration of the Church?’ You will excuse this freedom, Reverend Sir,

Agitur de vitâ et sanguine Turni.

Love to God, love to mankind in general, and love to that University, that *Alma Mater* where I had the honor of being educated, and, what is infinitely more, where I had the happiness of receiving the Spirit of God in my heart, altogether constrain me.” This expostulation is as a whole one of the ablest declamatory productions of its celebrated author; and nothing can be well more severe than his inquiry, why, if some were to be expelled for extempore *praying*, “some few others were not expelled for extempore *swearing*!” Powerful as this letter is, it does not enter into the history of the case, a deficiency supplied by the *Pietas Oxoniensis*, which was dedicated in very gentlemanlike terms to the chancellor of the University, the Earl of Lichfield, who had testified his approbation of the readmission of Mr. Grove to his college, but was actually opposed by the vice-chancellor and his assessors. Mr. Richard Hill gave, as far as he was able, a narrative of the entire proceedings, and examined the nature of the articles of accusation, exposing their unfairness, as well as the undue severity of the sentence of expulsion for acts of piety, when it was well known that the grossest immorality, instead of being punished, formed the frequent subject of indecent

mirth. He particularly remarked upon the character of a witness named Welling, who was reported to have made some flippant and sneering observations respecting the credibility of the miracles of the Old and New Testament, and who was known in the Hall by the name of "the Infidel." It was denied, however, that such was his true character, and an *apology* was made for him, Mr. Hill asserts, to the vice-chancellor, that when he called believers in miracles either "knaves or fools," he was unfortunately overcome with wine at the feast called "St. John's Gaudy." He was afterwards, it is admitted, convened before the vice-chancellor and others, and "after going through the farce of asking pardon in *Latin*¹ for what he had said, was dismissed with a gentle reprimand!" After canvassing the accusations brought against the expelled students, and giving an explanation of their proceedings, Mr. Hill proceeded in his pamphlet to examine at some length, the doctrines for which they were condemned, with a view to prove that "they were the very fundamental doctrines of the Church of England, and what they who passed the sentence, had in the most sacred manner bound themselves to defend." I confess that though he proves that the Reformation truths opposed are contained in the pandect of our Church's doctrine, he would have written much more effectively if he had taken them simply on their own broad scriptural basis, instead of calling them by any other name in order that he might attack the notions of Arminians. He weakened his cause and prejudiced many of his readers by this course, as well as by the levity he mingled with his gravest arguments—a fault both he and his brother Mr. Rowland Hill were too apt

¹ This was not correct: his apology and confession of intoxication were made in English, as will be shortly seen.

to commit. It was, however, not peculiar to them alone ; for almost every author who wrote against the errors and prejudices of those times, has fallen into it. It disfigures throughout, a work of great acuteness,—Berridge's *Christian World Unmasked*. Mr. Richard Hill, however, fairly admitted that the Arminians against whom he wrote, were not so much of the school of Arminius himself, as of Bishop Laud ; and declares, that if he was asked what they *held*, the only answer he could make, must be that made to the same question when they first began to get footing in the country, “ they *hold* many good livings among us, and it is likely they will soon *hold* all the fat benefices in the kingdom.” Upon the vantage ground where Mr. Hill stood, he had no need of any other weapon but the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. His mode of arguing unhappily roused many hostile feelings, in persons who would otherwise have been wholly on his side, some of whom, while they admitted the excellent intention and force of his pamphlet,¹ actually replied to his opinions on religious topics, and caused a controversy which exceedingly weakened the impression that might have been most extensively made upon the public mind, in favour of the young sufferers in the cause of piety.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, Mr. Hill's appeal in behalf of the expelled students was so effective, that it called forth an answer from Dr. Nowell, one of their judges, principal of St. Mary's Hall, and public orator of the University. He commenced with assuming that because Mr. Whitfield was their first champion, “ the complexion and characters” of those young men were so “ strongly marked” thereby, that a conviction from

¹ *Pietas Oxoniensis*.

this very circumstance must take place upon "the sober part of mankind, of the propriety and expedience of that censure which they had incurred." The *spirit* of his judgment, and the *logic* of his reasoning, seem pretty much upon a par here, though he declared that his conclusions were derived solely from the evidence which came before him. He warmly vindicated Mr. Higson, who had received the thanks of the Vice-Chancellor and his Assessors ; he also defended the refusal to allow the young men a copy of the articles of accusation. These he gave in his pamphlet, with minutes of the evidence that convicted them, in his view, of crimes worthy of the punishment inflicted.

I have been favoured with Mr. Higson's¹ own manuscript, of the charges brought against the six students of his College, from which it appears they were as follows :

1. That James Matthews, Thomas Jones, and Joseph Shipman were bred to trades ; and that the three last mentioned persons, and also Erasmus Middleton, and Benjamin Blatch were, at the respective times of their entrance in the said Hall, and at present are, destitute of such a knowledge in the learned languages as is necessary for performing the usual exercises of the said Hall, and of the University.

2. That Benjamin Kay, James Matthews, Thomas Jones, Thomas Grove, Erasmus Middleton, and Joseph Shipman are enemies to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, which appeareth either by their preaching or expounding in, or frequenting, illicit conventicles, and by several other actions and expressions contrary to the statutes of the University and the laws of this realm.

¹ This favour was obligingly conferred on me by the gentleman to whom they belong.

3. That Erasmus Middleton is moreover an enemy to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, as appears by his officiating as a minister in holy orders, although a layman, in the parish church of Chevely, or in one of the chapels of ease belonging and appertaining unto the said church of Chevely, in the county of Berks and diocese of Salisbury.

These were the principal imputations affecting their religious demeanour and literary qualifications. They were also accused of disrespect to their tutor, in either neglecting his lectures or misbehaving when attending them, as well as of going out of the University without leave, contrary to discipline and good order. This accusation has been previously noticed with the observations of Dr. Dixon upon it. That it was not proved, appears from the fact of its not being recited in the sentence of the vice-chancellor, their expulsion being wholly grounded on matters connected with their religion. Like the pious Jews in Babylon, they were found faultless till accused concerning their God. The remainder of the paper presented by Mr. Higson, contains an assertion of the notoriety of the proceedings of the accused, a vindication of the power of the vice-chancellor as visitor of their Hall, a commendation of his own motives, and a prayer for their punishment according to the statutes.

Such were the faults alleged against these pious young Oxonians; and as the charges are taken from the original manuscript of their accuser, and are found to correspond with those printed in Dr. Nowell's reply to *Pietas Oxoniensis*, there can be no doubt of their accuracy. I have also seen several of the answers returned from various quarters to Mr. Higson's inquiries respecting the characters of these youths and their proceedings,

which are truly indicative of the hostile spirit that then prevailed against all who professed the gospel. One gentleman wrote from Newport in Shropshire of Jones, that he had worked in his brother's shop, a barber in that town, "and there made me a very good periwig which I now wear."¹ But he added, "This was not all his employment: I am told he read much, and I know he associated with the people called Methodists, and put on the appearance of a person of great sanctity of manners. Thinking himself, I suppose, wiser than his neighbours, he took upon him to censure some whose sentiments or practice did not correspond with his, and to inform others that would listen to him, *which he took to be the right way*. And yet, notwithstanding this, he had humility enough to apply to the master of Newport school for a little Latin and Greek to pave his way to the Gown." This was refused him, but "the person he was chiefly indebted to, was the Rev. Mr. Newton, at Olney, Bucks, by whose means, and some other *of the same stamp*, he may be enabled to keep terms at Oxon." The same informant also says, that he had expounded a chapter, sung a hymn, and explained part of the thirty-nine Articles at Wheat Aston; but not one word appears against his moral conduct, nor was it ever inquired into. The other replies to Mr. Higson's questions manifest the same spirit on the part of almost all his correspondents. They contain also like information, varied only according to their respective circumstances, relating to the *Methodistical* proceedings of the accused, and particularly Mr. Grove. It is, however, by no means worth while to introduce any further extracts from these letters here.

¹ This was afterwards declared not to be true.

The only things considered as proved, were illiterateness¹ and low extraction against some of these students, and *Methodism* against them all. It is very clear that the first of these points ought to have been settled previously to their admission into the University, and that to charge them with it afterwards, was to impute to their accusing tutor negligence of his duty. But the real cause of the stir he made is plain enough to be seen in a note of his own: "Ash-Wednesday, Feb. 17, 1768. Mr. Matthews called upon me after dinner, and asked me to sign his testimonial, which I refused, and *the reason I gave* was, he had not given me in writing what those opinions were he maintained at the evening lecture about the operations of the Holy Spirit." However, all the charges, except that of misconduct to their tutor, being considered proved, the sentence of expulsion was pronounced, and Mr. Higson was publicly thanked for the exertions he had made.

In order that a fair judgment may be formed on the history of this case, the sentence of the vice-chancellor, in which the crimes of the expelled are recited, shall be given entire. It is as follows:

Oxford, March 11, 1768.

I. It having appeared to me, D. Durell, Vice-Chancellor of the University of *Oxford*, and undoubted Visitor of *St. Edmund Hall*, within the said University, upon due information and examination, that *James Matthews*

¹ Matthews was accused of being brought up a weaver, and of ignorance; Jones, of being a barber and no proficient in Latin and Greek; Shipman, of being a draper and illiterate; Middleton, of Methodism; Kay, of attending at Mrs. Durbridge's; Grove, of preaching, and Methodism; Blatch, of being a gentleman without any school learning—but he was not expelled.

of the said Hall, had been originally brought up to the trade of a weaver, and afterwards followed the low occupation of keeping a Tap-house ; that, afterwards, having connected himself with known Methodists, he did, without any the least proficiency in school knowledge, enter of *St. Edmund Hall* aforesaid, with a design to get into holy orders ; and that he still continues to be wholly illiterate, incapable of doing the statutable exercises of the Hall, and consequently more incapable of being qualified for holy orders, for which he had lately offered himself a candidate. Moreover, it having appeared by his own confession, that he had frequented illicit conventicles held in a private house in the city of *Oxford*. —Therefore I, D. Durell, by virtue of my visitatorial power, and with the advice and opinion of the Reverend Thomas Randolph, D. D. President of C. C. C., and *Margaret* Professor of Divinity in the University ; of the Reverend Thomas Fothergill, D. D. Provost of *Queen's College* ; of the Reverend Thomas Nowell, D. D. Principal of *St. Mary Hall*, and Public Orator ; and of the Reverend Francis Atterbury, M. A. Senior Proctor of the University, my several assessors regularly appointed on this occasion, do expel the said *James Matthews* from the said Hall, and do hereby pronounce him expelled.

II. It having also appeared to me that *Thomas Jones* of *St. Edmund Hall* had been brought up to the trade of a barber, which occupation he had followed very lately ; that he had made but small proficiency in learning, and was incapable of performing the statutable exercises of the said Hall : and moreover, it having appeared by his own confession, that he had frequented illicit conventicles in a private house in this town, and that he had himself held an assembly for public worship at

Wheat Aston ; in which he himself, though not in holy orders, had publicly expounded the Scriptures to a mixed congregation, and offered up extempore prayers.—Therefore I, D. Durell, by virtue of my visitatorial power, and with the advice and opinion of each and every one of my assessors, the reverend persons afore-named, do expel the said *Thomas Jones*, from the said Hall ; and hereby pronounce him also expelled.

III. It having also appeared to me that *Joseph Shipman*, of *St. Edmund Hall* aforesaid, had been a draper, was very illiterate, and incapable of performing the statutable exercises of the said Hall. Moreover, it having appeared by his own confession, that he had expounded publicly, though not in holy orders, the Holy Scriptures to a mixed congregation, and offered up extempore prayers.—Therefore I, D. Durell, by virtue of my visitatorial power, and with the advice and opinion of each and every one of my assessors, the reverend persons afore-named, do expel the said *Joseph Shipman* from the said Hall ; and hereby pronounce him also expelled.

IV. It having also appeared to me that *Erasmus Middleton*, of *St. Edmund Hall* aforesaid, by his own confession, had formerly officiated in the chapel of ease belonging to the parish of *Chevely*, in the county of *Berks*, not being in holy orders ; that he had been rejected from holy orders by the Bishop of *Hereford* for the said offence ; that he was discarded by his father for being connected with the people called *Methodists* ; and that he still is under his father's displeasure for the same. Moreover, it having appeared by credible witnesses, that he is still connected with the said people, and professes their doctrines, viz., that faith without works is the sole condition of salvation ; that there is

no necessity of works; that the immediate impulse of the Spirit is to be waited for. Therefore I, D. Durell, by virtue of my visitatorial power, and with the advice and opinion of each and every one of my assessors, the reverend persons afore-mentioned, do expel the said *Erasmus Middleton* from the said Hall, and hereby pronounce him also expelled.

V. It having also appeared to me that *Benjamin Kay*, of the said Hall, by his own confession, had frequented illicit conventicles in a private house in this town, where he had heard extempore prayers frequently offered up by one *Hewett*, a staymaker. Moreover, it having been proved by sufficient evidence that he held Methodistical principles, viz., the doctrine of absolute election; that the Spirit of God works irresistibly; that once a child of God, always a child of God: that he had endeavoured to instil the same principles into others, and exhorted them to continue stedfast in them against all opposition.—Therefore I, D. Durell, by virtue of my visitatorial power, and with the advice and opinion of each and every one of my assessors, the reverend persons before-mentioned, do expel the said *Benjamin Kay* from the said Hall, and hereby pronounce him also expelled.

VI. It having also appeared to me that *Thomas Grove*, of *St. Edmund Hall* aforesaid, though not in holy orders, had, by his own confession, lately preached to an assembly of people called *Methodists* in a barn, and had offered up extempore prayers in that congregation.—Therefore I, D. Durell, by my visitatorial power, and with the advice and opinion of each and every one of my assessors, the reverend persons afore-named, do expel the said *Thomas Grove* from the said Hall, and hereby pronounce him also expelled.

If the prejudices which led to this hard sentence are not sufficiently visible, as I think they are, in the very terms in which it was pronounced, they will appear distinctly enough when put in juxta-position with the record of the Vice-Chancellor's dealings with a young man of very opposite character, and a witness against the expelled students. This was the individual named Welling, mentioned before, of whom it was proved by credible testimony that he had been drunk, and called one William Wrighte "a fool" for professing belief in the miracles of Moses. He excused himself by saying that he was unhappily in liquor, and declared his unfeigned assent to the whole of Scripture. His apology was accepted; but though the praying students declared their willingness to give up their irregular proceedings if deemed contrary to discipline, they were turned out of the University! The drunken scoffer was admitted to forgiveness on asking pardon; but the sober youths had committed an unpardonable fault in meeting for prayer and acknowledging the work of the Holy Spirit! Who can deny the fact after this, that the powers that then were in Oxford treated disparagement of Scripture under the influence of wine as much less criminal than Methodism? The accepted apology of Welling still remains, and let it be read by every one who has reflected on the sentence of expulsion pronounced by Dr. Durell. The following is an exact copy:—

"Whereas it hath been alleged upon oath before the Reverend the Vice-Chancellor, against me John Welling, that on the 24th of June, 1767, in conversation with Mr. *Wrighte* and Mr. Middleton, of *St. Edmund Hall*, in this University, I made use of certain expressions tending to disparage the truth of revelation; and in par-

ticular the miracles of *Moses*—I do hereby declare my unfeigned assent to, and belief of, divine revelation in general, and the miracles wrought by *Moses* in particular; and I do aver that I was intoxicated in liquor (for which very criminal excess I am sincerely sorry) when I uttered those expressions; and whereas by the use of those expressions I have given but too just occasion of scandal and offence to the Vice-Chancellor and the members of this University—I do hereby ask pardon of them for the same; and I do further most solemnly protest, that however unguarded I may have been in the use of them, or any expressions whatsoever concerning religion, they were not declarative of my real principles, inasmuch as those principles are, and ever have been, and I trust will ever continue to be, diametrically opposite to scepticism and infidelity, which from my heart I detest and abhor.

Witness my hand,

JOHN WELLING.

Sworn before me }
 the ninth day of } D. DURELL, Vice-Chancellor.
 May, 1768.

We whose names are underwritten, do certify that *John Welling* read the above declaration publicly in congregation this tenth day of May, 1768.

D. DURELL, Vice-Chancellor.

B. WHEELER, Senior Proctor.

E. WHITMORE, Junior Proctor.

Such is Welling's apology; and in his answer to *Pietas Oxoniensis*, Dr. Nowell defended the lenity shewn him, while he approved the severity upon the students expelled. Well did Mr. Richard Hill observe in a pamphlet he called "*Goliath slain*," and in which he

replied to Dr. Nowell's Strictures on his former publication:—"You say Mr. Welling expressed concern for his crime, and did not Mr. Middleton express concern for his? Did not all the young men express concern that they had displeased their seniors, and did they not all abstain from the meetings as soon as they were informed that their going to them was contrary to the will of their governors in the University? Yea, had they not all proved the sincerity of their acknowledgments, by abstaining from these meetings, for a long time before they were summoned to attend Mr. Vice-Chancellor and his Assessors? Did they not declare, as well upon their trial as before, that it was their determination not to attend them again? And did not Doctor Dixon, their principal, urge this on their behalf before the court? Surely, then, if the Reverend Mr. Welling's black and horrible offences were so easily passed over upon his own acknowledgment of his fault, the well-meant mistakes of these youths, against whom no one act of immorality is alleged, might also have been overlooked; or if there had been any expelling in the case, it ought to have begun with Mr. Higson, by whose advice Mr. Jones had acted in attending the meetings, and who had himself (in the religious qualm spoken of in the second edition of *Pietas*) caused one of his pupils frequently to pray by him *extempore*?

"Again, if we consider the time between the young men's crime of praying and their expulsion, and Mr. Welling's crime of blaspheming and his ordination, we shall find that the former had at least given as long a proof of their regularity as Mr. Welling had of his repentance, since it could not be more than a few weeks, or at least a few months, between that gentleman's first declaration that 'whosoever believed the miracles of our

Lord and of Moses, must be a fool,' and his second declaration of being *inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him the office of the ministry, and of his unfeignedly believing all the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament*. However, to remedy all defects in point of time, Mr. Higson solemnly attests to the Bishop, that ever since he had been at College, he had known him to be of *sober* life and conversation, and that he *never* held any doctrines but those of the thirty-nine Articles: and others of his clerical friends as solemnly give a like testimony of his sound principles and holy practice for the space of three years, according to the usual form in such cases required."

If Dr. Nowell was appropriately termed "Goliath" in the pamphlet from which this passage is taken, there can be no doubt that he was "Goliath slain" by his young opponent, Mr. Hill; yet it is to be regretted that in an affair of so much importance, a different phraseology was not employed, inasmuch as it detracted considerably from the dignity of the noble and honest demonstration he had made to the credit both of his heart and understanding. But what renders the contrast between the cases of Welling and the students more striking still, is the fact that he was even of lower extraction than they were, although their obscure origin had been considered as rendering them unfit inmates of a seminary of gentlemen. Mr. Higson had also once complained of Welling that he was "so stupid that he despaired of his ever being a scholar;" but of the expelled, Kay, Middleton, and Grove were good classics, and the last unquestionably a gentleman. This comparison, therefore, between the cases of Welling and the Methodists plainly shews what pitiable prejudice actuated their opponents.

As was to be expected, the press teemed with publi-

cations relative to this extraordinary affair. The pamphlets of Mr. Hill were extensively circulated, and produced a strong feeling in favour of the youths whose cause he so generously espoused. But the most popular of all the things written on the subject was the "Shaver's Sermon," certainly a witty satire on the leading men at Oxford, but not calculated to leave such an impression on the mind, as the awful darkness and enmity against true godliness of the times rendered needful. This was the grand mistake of most of the writers on topics of so serious a nature, in those days. The spirit in which the "Shaver" sent forth his "Sermon" may be judged of from the fact that he took a quotation from a newspaper as "a text;" the least that can be said of which is, that it was a most inconsiderate levity. He, however stated fairly, though quaintly,

"1. I pretend not to justify any part of the Methodists' conduct, besides praying to God, reading and expounding the Scriptures, and singing of hymns, &c.

"2. I censure none of the clergy but such as are against praying, reading, and expounding the Scriptures, and singing of hymns.

"3. Whoever this coat is found to fit, I would have the gentleman put it on, and wear it as his own, assuring himself that it was made for him, and that, though a shaver, I am his tailor."

This mode of attacking the persecutors of Oxford, was not calculated to awaken serious inquiry into the character of the times and the blindness of churchmen, which ought to have been solemnly pointed out; and it is also much to be lamented that Mr. Hill did not combine more serious remonstrance with his unanswerable facts and arguments, instead of dwelling on his own peculiar views, and dealing too largely in ridicule, of

which, if needful at all, the newspapers were the proper vehicles. Nor, indeed, was it wanting in them, both in rhyme and prose. The following is a specimen sent to the Public Advertiser :—

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN A DOCTOR AND A PROCTOR.

Doctor. All hail, my good friend ! we have carried the day,
And, by fair means or foul, have sent them away.

Proctor. This prating of Faith and Regeneration
Is spreading its poison all over the nation.

Doctor. I ne'er knew the like since I've been a Doctor.

Proctor. Indeed, Sir, nor I, since I've been a Proctor.

Doctor. Bear witness, my friend, what pains I have taken ;
I've preached, foamed, and stamped till the pulpit has
shaken.

Proctor. Towards all of this way no mercy I shew,
For I feared all along whereunto it would grow.

Doctor. For Virtue and Works what a hero I've been,
As well by my writing as preaching is seen.

Proctor. Come, come, my good friend, there is nobody by,
Let us own the plain truth between you and I :
We talk and we preach of good works, it is true ;
We talk and we preach, but leave others to do ;
Against true Gospel zeal it is that we fight,
For we must be wrong if these young men are right.

Whether these lines came from the pen of Mr. Hill or not I have no means of positively determining, but he has elsewhere charged the Proctors with most unjustifiable conduct. These officers sheltered themselves under a profession of zeal to put down "illicit conventicles," which, after all, could not be proved to be so, but the very reverse ; yet their real object is too apparent in proceedings thus exposed by Mr. Richard Hill in one of his addresses to Dr. Nowell : " But, however the natural enmity of the carnal mind would shelter itself under the notion of suppressing *illicit* conventicles, .

yet that the same enmity is equally predominant against all experimental religion, whether in private or in a church, was very discernible when the Reverend Mr. Haweis was Curate of Magdalen parish at Oxford, into which church the *Reverend* Proctors have frequently come during the time of divine service, and *irreverently* driven out before them all the young men, who were weak enough to imagine that they were spending a leisure hour much better in the house of God, than at the coffee house or billiard table. *Mirabile dictu! Egomet hisce oculis vidi."*

When a person of such high respectability as Mr. Hill, declares that he saw these proceedings with his own eyes, and when we know that Mr. Higson received the thanks of the vice-chancellor of Oxford for his conduct towards the expelled students, we can only tremble at the recollection of the awful danger our Church was in from such demonstrations on the part of persons, who ought to have known that the very doctrines they so violently opposed, were what they had actually promised to defend as sons of their reformed *Alma Mater*.¹ How singular does it seem also to us now, that one charge gravely brought against the young men was their connection with "reputed Methodists—Venn, Newton, and others!" For indeed, had not a gracious Providence raised up such enlightened and devoted ministers, to make known to the nation the real character of the Church, and to rouse its pastors from their lethargy,

¹ The London Chronicle had these lines among others on this expulsion:—

Where Cranmer died, where Ridley bled,
Martyrs for truth sincere,
See Cranmer's faith and Ridley's hope,
Thrust out and martyred there.

there is too much reason to believe that our establishment and Oxford too, would long ago have had to mourn over the loss of those privileges which, by the divine blessing, it is trusted they will for ages to come, enjoy and adorn. Be it, however, remembered that their perils are not so much from threatenings without as from unsoundness within. An anecdote of the celebrated Laud will illustrate the meaning of this remark. That well-known prelate once inquired of a daughter of the Earl of Devonshire, who had turned Papist, the reason of the change. She replied, "It is chiefly because I hate to travel in a crowd." When pressed for further explanation, she said, "I perceive your Grace and many others are making haste to Rome, and therefore, to prevent being crowded, I am gone before you." There is a class of modern divines who may take a hint from this answer. The unsoundness of the last century which vented itself in acts of persecution, carrying with them their own palpable condemnation, was less likely to be prejudicial to the cause of truth, than the smooth and specious sophistry of the semi-Romanists, propounded with a winning gentleness by men of so much virtue and zeal, that it would be unjust to attribute to them any other spirit than that of sincerity. The many good personal qualities they possess, lead also to the indulgence of a hope that they will listen to the powerful remonstrances, that have recently appeared against the doctrines of the "Tracts for the Times," and that they will ere long be brought to see that different views are necessary to the consistency of those, who call themselves members of venerable and Protestant Oxford, and ministers of the Church of England.

CHAPTER VI.

THE OXFORD DIVINES OF THE LAST AND PRESENT CENTURIES.
UNIVERSITY SYSTEMS.

OXFORD TRACTS.

It must be distinctly understood that the observations in this chapter, are not meant to apply to the foundations upon which the reformed and protestant superstructure of the venerable Oxford stands, it is hoped immoveably; but to certain incongruous deformities which a few of her sons have erected in the midst of her, and daubed with most "untempered mortar." Though widely different in its leading characteristics from the *moral orthodoxy*, so named, of the days of the expelled students, the semi-Romanism of these times has an equal tendency to impair the principles of the Reformation. The divines of that age warred against the spiritual tenets of the Reformers; the authors of the Oxford Tracts, though in a different way, are promoting the same end, by giving an undue efficacy to outward observances, and by disfiguring the spiritual worship of the sanctuary, with the uncongenial appendages of forms wisely rejected by the framers of our Liturgy. At the period referred to in the last chapter, the theologians of Oxford contended only with the *light* of the word of God; the writers of the Tracts impair its *authority* by traditions.

The former added persecution to error ; the latter conduct themselves with mildness and write like gentlemen. The one class excited indignation ; the other calls forth pity and regret, but demands an honest exposure.

The pulpit of St. Mary's, Oxford was in the last century continually occupied by welcome impugnors of the leading doctrines of the Reformation, such as, if they preached now, would quickly drive away the majority of the audience from any church whatever. As an example of this school of divinity, we may take a sermon of the Rev. John Allen, vice-principal of St. Mary Magdalen Hall, preached on Sunday, July 19, 1761, which was so palatable to his hearers, that the vice-chancellor requested its publication. It is moreover particularly suited to these pages, since it called forth a pamphlet in reply from the pen of Mr. Richard Hill, a copy of which is still in existence, with the manuscript corrections of the author and his brother Rowland. The sermon was entitled " No acceptance with God by Faith only ;" and the text was James ii. 14—*Can faith save him ?* This *learned* divine did not then know the way to answer the common question put to every bible student, " How do you reconcile St. Paul and St. James ?" The sermon began thus : " One design of this epistle is to confute a notion, which some mistaken converts to Christianity had unhappily imbibed from St. Paul's doctrine concerning faith, as if he had taught that *that*, and that alone, would convert and justify the disciples of Jesus." Mr. Richard Hill, without noticing the confusion of mind evident in this passage, simply observes : " If by this, Mr. Allen means to assert that the apostle James is confuting that monstrous and diabolical doctrine, that a mere speculative assent to the gospel truths,—that is, a dead unoperative faith,

can justify,—he is most certainly in the right, nor can we in too strong terms bear testimony against so dangerous a delusion ; but if he would insinuate, as plainly appears to be the case, that a lively operative faith,—a faith which is *the gift of God*, and the work of his Spirit in the heart,—cannot justify, then he evidently makes the two apostles contradict each other ; and St. James, instead of confuting a *mistaken notion*, will be found to be confuting the assertions of his brother Paul.” This was indeed the main subject of the disputes of the day ; and the question was so well handled in a visitation sermon preached at the time, by Mr. Hartley, rector of Winnick, in Northamptonshire, that I cannot refrain from introducing here a passage from it, quoted by Mr. Hill. “ If indeed,” says he, “ no more was meant by faith, than a mere historical faith, a bare assent of the mind to the credibility of things, in the language of the schools, as far forth as credible ; a belief of something extorted by dint of argument, rising no higher than moral evidence can force it, and sinking again under the objections of every subtle disputant ; if this be all that is meant by gospel faith, it would indeed be matter of wonder if such a faith could justify : if this were a saving faith, I should think the very devils capable of salvation : but surely we do not mean that this is the faith of which St. Paul speaks so many great and glorious things ; that faith by which the saints of old *subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions*, and did so many other marvellous works. It cannot be said, that such is the faith defined by the same apostle, to be *the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen* ; putting us into a kind of present possession of the promises, and setting divine truths before the mind

in all the light and power of demonstration : it cannot, I am sure, with any truth or propriety be so said of it. The faith then that we contend for as truly Christian and justifying, does not arise from historical evidence only ; much less does it consist in forced speculations, or the uncertain conclusions of human reason ; but is of higher extraction, *even the gift of God* ; it is a seed of the divine life in the soul, growing up in a gradual approach towards perfection, and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit ; *a faith working by love*, producing obedience to all God's commands, and abounding in good works, according to that measure of abilities which God hath given us : it is a power from on high, at once enlightening and converting the soul ; it is that victory whereby we overcome the world : and to sum up all in this emphatical conclusion, it is hereby that Christ becomes *Immanuel, or God with us*, and *is made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.*" When our Church¹ asserts that we are justified by faith, no enlightened person conceives that thereby is meant that the grace of faith itself justifies in the way of meritorious cause. It is only the instrumental cause ; the hand by which we receive Christ, whose atonement is the sole cause of our justification. Thus Archbishop Usher observes : " Faith is an instrument whereby my justification is wrought, an instrument whereby Christ is received. We must know that in point of receiving we all live on God's alms ; all our justification is his gift, and faith is that palsy hand which receives all our comfort."

But the sermon which the vice-chancellor of Oxford desired to have printed, denied faith to be the instrumental cause, or indeed any cause at all of our justifica-

¹ See Article XI.

tion ; and it may be taken as a pretty fair specimen of the favorite theology of his days. Mr. Richard Hill, however, shrewdly observes of the Oxford *logician*, “ I should be glad to know how he could prove that to be *no cause*, without which an effect cannot be produced ? ” Mr. Allen’s idea was, that works “ such as we have covenanted to perform under this last and best dispensation, such as proceed from faith in Christ,” were the causes of our justification. To this Mr. Hill replied in the words of Bishop Beveridge, taken from his *Private Thoughts* : “ It is matter of admiration to me how any one that pretends to the use of his reason, can imagine that he should be accepted before God, for what comes from himself : for how is it possible that I should be justified by good works, when I can do no good work at all before I be first justified ? My works cannot be accepted as good, till my person be so ; nor can my person be accepted by God, till first engrafted into Christ ; before which engrafting into the true Vine, it is impossible I should bring forth good fruit.” But what was still more extraordinary, these *logical* divines, after having stated their views of the necessity of works to justify, roundly asserted that justification took place in baptism, like some modern Oxonians, as will be noticed presently. Mr. Hill pointedly observes on this notion, “ In order to make him (Mr. Allen) consistent with himself, we must suppose him an anabaptist, or else that he would have all infants do good works before they are baptized.”

One chief objection made by this school of preachers to the doctrine of justification by faith, was, that it excluded the necessity of good works. But how well did the learned Hooker observe : “ It is a childish cavil our adversaries so greatly please themselves with, exclaiming that we tread all Christian virtues under our feet, be-

cause we teach that *faith alone justifieth*. Whereas by this speech, we never meant to exclude either hope or charity from being always joined as inseparable mates with faith in the man that is justified; or works from being added as necessary duties required of every justified man, but to shew that faith is the only hand that putteth on Christ to justification; and Christ the only garment which, being so put on, covereth the shame of our defiled natures, hideth the imperfection of our works, and preserveth us blameless in the sight of God."

It is not necessary to enlarge on a doctrine so often unanswerably expounded, and which is now so widely diffused and accepted, further than to bring into notice historically, the unmerited animosity to which it subjected its pious defenders in the days of the Oxford students, and for some time subsequent to their expulsion. To shew how extremely in the dark these adversaries of *Methodism*, as they called it, were, we have only to quote the extraordinary misrepresentation of its "leading tenet" from the sermon of Mr. Allen, sanctioned by the vice-chancellor of Oxford. "It is," says he, "the leading tenet of modern enthusiasm, that any one by *suddenly believing* that Jesus Christ shed his blood for his sins is *instantaneously saved*." It was time indeed that they should be reminded that they were first distorting, and then condemning the articles of their own Church and the most prominent doctrines of the Reformation.

The period is past for the renewal of such attacks upon evangelical teachers; but there is now in active operation the same anti-reformation principle, only in a form more likely to be attractive in this day of inquiry, than the cold *morality* of the preceding age of dry logic and dull ethics. To these specious reasonings we must

firmly and mildly oppose ourselves, if we would accelerate the progress of sound spiritual religion. Nor must we be diverted from our purpose, by any exemplary qualities we may admire in the persons of these mistaken but respectable writers.

It is impossible in a brief chapter of observations contained in a biography itself not very extended, to attempt a full refutation of the opinions sent forth into the world by the authors of the "Tracts for the Times." But a few remarks upon some of the doctrines they contain, will not be irrelevant to the general purposes of the present volume.

The foundation upon which these theologians rest, is that "Catholicity is the *only test* of Truth;"¹ and their primary object is to build on the old rotten basis of *tradition*. They assert that the *best* divines of our Church, from the list of which they carefully exclude the Reformers of the sixteenth century, held views, the sum of which is comprised in the following compendium: "Catholic tradition teaches revealed truth, Scripture proves it; Scripture is the document of faith, tradition the witness of it; the true creed is the Catholic interpretation of Scripture, or scripturally-proved tradition; Scripture by itself teaches mediately and proves decisively; tradition by itself proves negatively and teaches positively; *Scripture and tradition taken together are the joint rule of faith.*" Thus they sum up their not-over lucid statement. They acknowledge at the same time, that the extracts from English divines given in their "Catena Patrum," are but expositions and comments upon the celebrated tract of Vincentius Lirinensis on heresy, which they conceive from the respect paid to

¹ Tracts for the Times, No. 78, *Ad populum*.

his notions by the authors they quote, may be looked upon as "the formal manifestation of our Church as regards all the controversies of the last three hundred years." This remarkable tract was written in the fifth century, and was chiefly directed against the Pelagians and Nestorians, and others, the first of whom Vincentius calls "certain frogs, corruptible gnats and flies,"¹ while he denounces Nestorius as one who "from a sheep suddenly transformed into a wolf, began to devour the flock of Christ." The acuteness with which he reasons against these heresies is undeniable, and some of his observations are worthy of our admiration; but unfortunately, he sets out with asserting that it is by the word of God and tradition jointly, that our faith must be defended and preserved. To this end, he uses thoroughly *Popish* arguments; and how far he is entitled to be the expositor of *Protestant* views of tradition, may be at once imagined from the high commendation Bellarmine the champion of Popery bestows on his work.² What right also, a man holding such notions on tradition, has to be considered as agreeing with our Church, will best appear from the words of our sixth Article, which makes a declaration perfectly the contrary. "Holy Scripture," it declares, "contains *all* things necessary for salvation: so that whatever is not *read therein*, nor may be *proved thereby*, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary for salvation." If our Oxford divines mean to elude this plain statement, I would tell them an anecdote for their consideration. A worthy sufferer of the name of Hawkes, was under ex-

¹ "Ranæ quædam et cyniphes et muscæ moriturae."

² Bellarmine says of him, "*Scriptit opusculum parvum mole, sed virtute maximum.*"

amination before one of Bonner's chaplains, of whom he ventured to inquire, "Is not the Scripture sufficient for my salvation?" "Yes," replied the chaplain, "it is sufficient for our salvation, but not for instruction." "Well then," rejoined the honest but quaint martyr, "God send me the *salvation*, and take you the *instruction*." So when the writer of the *Catena Patrum*, No. III., asserts that Scripture "proves decisively," and that "tradition by itself proves negatively," I would say to him, "give me the *decisive* proof, and take you the *negative* one—only pray keep it to yourself if you are so fond of it, and do not send it forth to mystify the Christian Church." In making these remarks, it is not intended to assert that we reject tradition altogether, for we embrace some traditional points *historical* and *cere-monial*; but there is a wide distinction between these and opinions of *faith* or *precept*, which must have a sure basis, like that which can alone be found in the written, unanswerable volume of divine inspiration. This view will be maintained by sound Churchmen in spite of being called *ultra-protestant*, remembering that the friends of the sole authority of the word of truth have been nicknamed before, by the *Cabalist* Jews who applied to such contemptuously the term *karaim*, and by the Catholics who bestowed upon the men who opposed tradition that of *Scripturarians*. Thank God, we belong to a *Scripturarian* Church.

But I would further ask those persons who conceive that "Scripture and tradition taken together, are the joint rule of faith," whether they do not believe the true Church is "built upon the foundation of the *apostles and prophets*, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone?" And if they admit this, then I would inquire is not every *doctrine* necessary for a Christian to know,

revealed in the writings of the apostles and prophets ? Christ and his apostles condemned those who rested on human traditions instead of the Old Testament ; and if this was spoken with reference to the books of Moses and the prophets, it is true *a fortiori* of the canon of the Old and New Testament together. Certain modes and forms in themselves not *essential* and so not explicitly laid down, but left open in the Bible, may be fairly referred to tradition ; but this is an entirely different thing from basing on it *articles of faith*. “ We look,” says Mede, “ after the forms, rites, and discipline of antiquity, and endeavour to bring our own as near as we can to that pattern ;” but the extreme care of this learned writer with regard to *fundamentals*, appears throughout the whole of his well known letters to Mr. Hartlib. I mention Mede, because the writer of the *Catena Patrum* has quoted him in his favor, with the same infelicity which marks his choice of several other authors. He had better listen to Mr. Mede’s observation on Truth and consider it well : “ I cannot believe that truth can be prejudiced by the discovery of truth ; but I fear that *the maintenance of truth by fallacy* may not end in a blessing.” With regard to tradition, the Romanists are placed in this dilemma : by them tradition is made to supply the *defects*, as they say, of Scripture, and Scripture is made to supply the defects of tradition ; but both are undermined by the interpreting authority of the Church ! Neither Scripture nor tradition have weight with them but by that authority—that is, they believe nothing but themselves ! If our Oxford writers are not very careful indeed, they will soon find that they are in a similar difficulty, out of which it is to be wished that they may find a happy extrication, by reverting to the good old principles which make the Bible the only foun-

dation of every article of faith. We call the Scriptures *canonical*, not because the authority of the Church has stated them to be so, but because they supply a *canon* or rule to the Church by which ecclesiastical doctrines must be tested, as well as the spiritual condition of every believer. As to the antiquity made a ground for tradition, what is so old as the Bible itself? The sacred writings are the oldest records of religion; and in making them our guide we follow antiquity, authenticity, and inspiration. What can we need more? Nay, as we can diminish nothing from the doctrines of the word of God, without taking a link from the luminous and perfect chain of truth, so we can add nothing thereto without impairing its proportions, and mingling with the lustre and beauty of its celestial shining, the dimness and clumsiness of the dogmas of man.

Near akin to the error just adverted to, and invariably joining hands with it in its misty path, is the notion of the *efficacy* of the Sacraments. When we see the extremes into which men are carried in their speculations on this subject, it is an unspeakable privilege to have a Church amongst us, like ours, maintaining the true *mean*. Far be it from us to look upon these sacred ordinances as only *nude* rites, or mere pictures of grace, when we ought to know that they are nothing less than signs to exhibit, seals to confirm, and channels to convey to the souls of the faithful the choicest blessings of the Covenant.

Believing, as we do, that the children of Christian parents are not "unclean but holy,"¹ we conceive that they are as much called to baptism as infants of Jewish parents were to circumcision. Hereby they are intro-

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 14.

duced into a fœderal change of condition, and are so accounted the children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. Thus they are “*by baptism regenerate* ;”¹ but spiritual regeneration, or conversion, the entire change of heart whereby they are rendered meet for the enjoyment of gospel privileges here, and a gospel destiny hereafter, is the subsequent work of the Holy Ghost, and must take place in the soul of every true believer. It is no less than idolatry to suppose that there is any intrinsic virtue in the act of baptism, to cause this spiritual change in the heart, which is God’s own great work therein. To attribute such an efficacy to this ordinance, is to follow sense rather than faith, and to enclose the grace of God in a visible element. Yet, far be it from any one to undervalue the sacrament of baptism. An ancient father well observes, that in man there is a body and a soul ; and to answer both, there is a twofold baptism, outward and inward.² The former is the water which represents the cleansing of the flesh, the latter is Christ by his Spirit purifying the soul. This spiritual cleansing is effected by him in such as being united to him by faith, are parts of his mystic body ; and when the sacraments are received aright, they are instrumentally channels of the purifying stream of the water of life, which proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb. But this blessing comes only from the Lord. It is not from the ordinance, *ex opere operato*, to those, as the Council of Trent held, *non ponentibus obicem*, not putting a bar in the way. For if this were true,

¹ On the history of baptism, Lightfoot has a long and most curiously learned note on Matt. iii. 6.

² Διτῶν δὲ ὄντων ἡμῶν, ἐκ ψυχῆς, λέγω, καὶ σώματος, καὶ τῆς μὲν ἰρα-
τῆς, τῆς δὲ ἀοράτης φύσεως, διττὴ καὶ ἡ κάθαρσις δι’ ὕδατος δὲ, φῆμι, καὶ
πνεύματος.—*Nazian.*

baptism would regenerate an adult in his sleep or in a swoon, for he could then put no bar in the way! One might suppose that common sense would alone prevent such absurd notions as the admirers of this doctrine desire to circulate. An unlettered American Indian could reason better, as the following anecdote will shew; and there is more sense in what he said than in all the Oxford Tracts upon the subject put together. A French Jesuit once visited a tribe of this singular people, and taught as usual the *efficacy* of baptism. But a chief, when he heard of the power of the regenerating Word and Spirit of the living God from a Protestant Missionary, contrasted the teaching of the two Missionaries, in a few plain but unanswerable words of broken language. "That goes right here to my heart, not like that other nonsense talk. The Great Spirit wants clean here"—pointing to his heart—"never mind face. What have *bad* men to do with baptism? Water on face all go for nothing to bad man. Jim Beech-tree mad as ever with strong water. Baptize on face do him no good: he *old Jim* still."¹ Learned Oxonians, learn of this poor uneducated Indian! Learn also that the doctrines inculcated in your Tracts, if they are supported by human tradition, are opposed to the whole tenor of the word of God, to the Catechism of your own Church, and to the common sense of mankind—to everything but Popery.

Nor may we suppose that there is any more *inherent virtue* in the Eucharist than in baptism. There is nothing in the Bible, or in the doctrines of our Church, which can be construed into anything like an approach to such an opinion. Our Catechism declares that self-

¹ Memoir of Erasmus Simon.

examination, repentance, faith, and holy resolutions of amendment are requisite to its due reception. How can any one conceive for an instant, that there is a physical operation in the elements, an active virtue in the bare ordinance? The blessing lies in communion with God through these visible channels—"in the golden oil of the Spirit communicating itself through the golden pipes,"¹ and brought down by the instrumentality of living faith. The bread and wine are exhibited to our senses, and a crucified Saviour to our faith. The very name given by St. Paul to the elements, "the communion of the body and blood of Christ,"² indicates this distinction; and Theophylact observes upon it, that the Apostle did not say μετοχή, *a participation*, but κοινωνία, *a communion*; which conveys the assurance that a union between Christ and believers is a necessary qualification for the Sacrament. Herein we eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; we dwell in him, and he in us, and seal our union with him, which evidently cannot be the case with all receivers, but the faithful only. To recipients of all kinds, there is an *historical* remembrance of the Saviour's death, to believers there is a *fiducial* remembrance. But where is the faith that is requisite to make it so? Certainly not in the Sacrament, but in their own hearts. It is the duty of every friend of Protestant religion to repudiate all other notions, though sanctioned by erudition, high moral character and disinterested generosity, supported by isolated quotations from the ponderous dusty tomes of the Bodleian itself!

A great part of the usefulness of Sir Richard Hill and the other Revivalists of his day, consisted in their drawing the public attention to those prominent doctrines of

¹ Polhill's *Christus in Corde*.

² 1 Cor. x. 16.

the gospel which the ignorant divines, or rather moralists, of their times had banished from their general discourses, and to which they never adverted but in terms of opposition. But these truths were not the less essential parts of Christianity, because excluded from the teaching of men who called themselves *orthodox*. The all-important topics of human depravity, conviction of sin, conversion to God, faith, sanctification, justification, &c., are here alluded to, and are inseparable from the great leading doctrine of the *Atonement*. It is also obvious that the services of the Church of England, are all so composed as fully to recognise them throughout. Its confessions, petitions, and thanksgivings every where suppose an acknowledgment of them. But, as though the spirit of those bygone times of dearth and dreariness were inventing fresh weapons for mastery again, we are told by men calling themselves Churchmen, *par excellence*, that “the prevailing notion of bringing forward the Atonement *explicitly* and *prominently* on all occasions, is evidently quite opposed to what they consider the teaching of Scripture, nor do they find any sanction for it in the Gospels.” And they add, “*if* the Epistles of St. Paul *appear* to favour it, it is only at first sight.”¹ Let these learned theologians only put the arguments of this Apostle, in his Epistle to the Romans, into a *logical* form—they are Oxford men, and ought to know how—and they will find their skill wonderfully baffled if they attempt to make good their hasty assertion. Notwithstanding what they have said on this point, they are obliged to admit that “the whole of St. Paul’s life and actions after his conversion, and the whole of his teaching as appears from the Epistles, may be said to have

¹ Tracts for the Times, No. 80, *ad Clerum*, p. 74.

been nothing else but a setting forth of Christ crucified, as the one great principle which absorbed all his heart and actuated all his conduct." They allow also, that the words he uses "imply the Atonement;" but "it is a very different view, and in fact the opposite to the modern notion, that St. Paul always intends by it." What, then, do they suppose he does intend by it? They assert that what he means, "is the necessity of being crucified to the world, our humiliation together with him, mortification of the flesh, being made conformable to his death." So this is the *Atonement*, whereby God's justice is satisfied, His mercy glorified, the law magnified and made honourable, every perfection of Deity exalted, and man redeemed! No doubt the state of mind described in the passage last cited, is to be found in every true Christian, as the evidence of having rightly received the atonement; but it is no more the thing so luminously asserted by St. Paul, than the signs of animation are life itself. Nor is it true that the notion, "now so attractive," tends rather to diminish than increase a sense of responsibility, and consequent humiliation; for repentance being the first thing insisted upon by the teachers of the atonement, renders the latter assertion palpably incorrect, while the fruits universally required by them in the way of evidence contradict the former. It is hoped sincerely that there is too much light in these days, for anything like a wide diffusion of such views, and that the efforts of those who would bring them into notice are about as certain to succeed, as attempts they might make, with equal absurdity, but much less mischief, to revive the system of Ptolemy in opposition to that of Newton, the theory of *phlogiston* against modern chemistry, or the whimsical fancy of Burnet's *Mundane Egg* in refutation of the discoveries of our

living geologists. All these things might they find on the shelves of old libraries, and if they were pleased to reprint them with translations, as they have done the Tract of Vincentius Lirinensis, their philosophy and their theology would be most appropriate companions.

One thing, however, may not a little tend to open the eyes of a thinking people, and perhaps ere long of the propounders themselves, to the nature of this theological *quackery*, and that is, the *mountebank* character of its outward accompaniments. Not content with endeavouring to revive certain doctrines of Romanism rooted out by our Reformers, they must bring in some of its exploded mummeries. A Protestant minister, like a Romish priest, turning his back on the people and his face towards a cross placed over the communion table, is a sight one should scarcely have expected to have seen in the nineteenth century. Nor should we have imagined a few years ago, that a learned clergyman would have been heard in these days, seriously addressing his parishioners on the *perfect pattern* he had followed in the erection of their church, and comparing its windows to the twelve Apostles, its seven arches to the pillars of the Church, its windows of three devices, to the Trinity, &c. ! But such things have happened ; and there has been also introduced an addition to the vestments of the clergy, in the shape of a strip of silk, with a fringe and a cross, in the form of the St. Andrew's or Martyr's cross, to be worn in one way by the deacons and in another by the priests. The adoption of this habiliment may appear to be a mere trifle ; and so it would be, were it not part of a system calculated to work upon the animal feelings and physical nature, leaving the heart unchanged, and the understanding in darkness as to the spiritual truths of the gospel. In perfect keeping with all these

proceedings, are the lamentations made over the omission of chrism and other ceremonials in the baptismal service, which, as the Reformation outgrew the prejudices in favour of these relics of Popery, were properly excluded from it. One might imagine that these Churchmen had adopted the old interpretation of the words of our Lord to his disciples, *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now*;¹ which was in former times, as Augustine tells us, made to cover the traditional dreams and fantasies of Romanism, by being considered to mean that our Lord spake many things which were to be handed down to us, not in writing, but orally. These mysteries thus transmitted, it is argued, the more mature church would accept, though the apostles in their infantine condition could not bear them! But when inquiry was made as to what these great things were which the apostles were unable to receive, the answer turned out to be, as an old writer informs us,² “forsooth, oyl and spittle in baptism, candles’ light at noon dayes, baptizing of bells, and such like gue-gaws as the grossest and carnallest men are fittest to receive.” To an equally miserable state, the writers now under consideration seem to be hastening; and every man who values pure Protestantism, is bound to warn them of their danger. Moreover, it really appears to be high time for the authorities of our Church to interfere.

But the object I have in view, is to shew that the anti-evangelical demonstrations of the last century, and the revival of Popish doctrines and ceremonies now, have, though in widely different ways, the same tendency to overturn the great leading tenet of the gospel—justifica-

¹ John xvi. 12.

² See Leigh’s *Body of Divinity*, p. 116.

tion by faith. It matters not whether we place our justification in moral works, or refer it to the efficacy of ordinances ; the effect is the same in weakening the impression that it is through faith alone. It is also worthy of remark, that the *moralists* of the last century and the *semi-Romanists* in this, make precisely the same objection to that doctrine in its purity, namely, that it leads to Antinomianism. Here, however, the question might fairly be asked, can anything advanced respecting this faith, which worketh by love and is fruitful of good works, have in it an equal leaning to this awful error, with the idea that a baptized man is, *ex opere operato*, a justified man ? However devout and full of good works the propounders of such a notion may be, can they fail to see the inevitable consequence of such an assertion ? It is clearly, therefore, incumbent on the friends of true religion and the Church, to endeavour to arouse the attention of the country to the good old truths set forth in the days of the Reformation,¹ and to explain and enforce the character and effects of that faith in the atonement, without which, be his trust in ordinances or works what it may, it is impossible for any man to please God. Happily for us, God has graciously provided, that though error can assume almost every variety of aspect suited to any "times," there is but one way of putting it to flight—the sword of the Spirit, the word of truth, which, though framed to correct every wrong condition whereof man is capable, is like its author, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

I cannot close the present chapter without noticing the fact, that the efforts made in the last century for an amelioration in the literary system at Oxford, were coin-

¹ The Prayer Book and Homily Society is doing incalculable service by these means at the present moment.

cident with those of the religious revivalists who caused such a stir in that University. The first mention in the statutes of a change in the examinations, seems to be in 1768 ; and it was then ordered that they should include both scholarship and philosophy.¹ Before this time, all masters of arts, after the first year of their attainment of their full powers as such, were entitled to give testimonials to any candidate, but from the date of the regulation of 1768, these masters, called "regents," were to be divided into several sets of three, of whom the first set examined the first day, the second the second day, and so on. What was comprised under the term *philosophia* before that time does not seem quite certain, but chiefly, it is conceived, the Ethics of Aristotle and Logic. Nor was it quite clear that in those days, the testimonial given by a regent master of arts always implied philosophical proficiency, but there are sundry *traditions*—to be received of course with caution—about its having been the custom when a candidate wanted his testimonial, for him to ask some M.A. of his acquaintance to a good dinner, and to pay him a certain fee. When we recollect, however, that Oxford sent forth under the old system such men as Warton, Blackstone, Horne, Bradley, and others, there must have been strength somewhere, and systematic erudition working under the pressure of University courses, that appeared to the uninitiated a mass of indefensible forms little less than farcical. All this, too, was accompanied with a pompous affectation far different from the dignity of true philosophy and sound discipline. So formal are the Oxonians of the last century said to have been, that there is yet in circu-

¹ The words in which the change is announced are, "Neque vero in philosophicis solis, intra quos fines stetit angusta superioris sæculi eruditio, verum etiam in philologicis instituaturs examen."

lation a story of one of the heads of houses, who, on being suddenly urged to hasten to a part of his college that had caught fire, is reported to have replied, "I cannot possibly go till I have put on my cap, gown, and bands!" At this time, when the quantity of *digested* knowledge in morals and metaphysics required for the highest honors, is sufficient to exercise the powers of the examiners to the uttermost, no Oxford man will be offended by being reminded, that at one period a mere *skeleton* vivâ voce examination in three treatises of Aristotle, and a very bare acquaintance, with logic were sufficient for a first class. Indeed the contrast of the present with past days, should only make Oxonians more grateful to the proposers of improvements, which have caused any man who has attained the last-named honour at Oxford, to be looked on as a person of very superior talents and acquirements in every seat of learning throughout Europe. The subjects of the gradual alterations of the courses of study in both our leading Universities, and their effects upon the mental discipline of the students, together with the coincident diffusion of knowledge, are worthy of a very masterly pen. A treatise on these topics, written in a lively engaging style, yet containing solid and authentic information, would be of great value to the literary world, and might tend to remedy any defects now existing in the most enlightened and comprehensive systems of tuition. Moreover, if it contained a comparison of foreign seats of learning with our own, and combined with a history of the English Universities and their courses, that of the most celebrated places and modes of study on the Continent, it might prove a very useful production at the present moment, when perhaps there is some danger of philosophy turning giddy in the prodigious elevation to which it has risen.

It was at the commencement of the present century, that Oxford made the great change in the mode of its examinations, and these improvements were very much owing to the exertions of Dr. Cyril Jackson, Dean of Christchurch. The rise of the system now pursued may be dated from the statute of 1800; but the alterations then made probably weakened the old course more rapidly than they acquired strength for themselves; for although official examiners were appointed to conduct both a classical and mathematical examination, the latter was wont to create a smile when contrasted with what was done in that science at another University. Still the scheme was promising. It may be comprised under the following heads—the appointment of official examiners—the adding to the classical examination one in mathematics—the declaration of the necessity of an examination in divinity—the institution of an extraordinary examination in the year, in which they who distinguished themselves were arranged in two classes, both in order of merit, the first limited to twelve, the second of no fixed number. This came into force in 1804, and continued till 1807, when a further change was effected, which made the arrangement of the two classes alphabetical instead of by order of merit, and caused this examination to take place at the time of ordinary examinations. In 1825, the classes were increased to three, and separate examiners were appointed for mathematics. The last change happened about eight or nine years ago, and in addition to the increased literary acquirements now necessary for honours, the candidates for the degree of B.A. are expected to be well read in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, and to have a general knowledge of Old Testament history, as well as of the thirty-nine Articles and such parts of Church history as are

connected with them. Great encouragement is offered to proficiency in critical skill, by the yearly scholarships instituted expressly for that purpose; but in the regular examinations most weight is attached to a knowledge of Aristotle, Plato, and Butler, under the head of moral philosophy.

It has been too much the fashion of late years, for persons to speak of the courses of study pursued at our principal Universities, as not sufficiently calculated to prepare young men for their respective professions, and particularly the ministry. It would be too much to say that in this respect the systems are not capable of improvement; but in general it will be found that such objectors have not thoroughly considered in the abstract, the effect of mental discipline upon *any* profession. The Cambridge¹ course of mathematics, if it is not weakened by an excessive fondness for *analytical* methods, to the injury of the more obvious training by the plainer modes of *geometrical* study, must tend to give a power to the understanding, of grasping and arranging subjects of every kind. It is reported of the late Lord Chancellor Eldon, an Oxford man of the old school, that he remarked he could always tell a young Chancery barrister, who from honours at Cambridge was rising to eminence at the bar, by the way in which he *reasoned* his case. The cause of this was evidently the discipline to which the reasoning powers had been subjected, in the three years reading at the University; nor is it easy to overrate the advantages of such a period of study thus conducted with a definite and stimulating end. The dan-

¹ Cambridge was not thought of on the Continent some seventy years ago as it is now. The Abbé Bourlet records his visit to it thus:—"Nous fûmes coucher à Cambridge, ville savante et pauvre, où il y a trois mille pédans et pas un pavé de grès."

gers of merely mathematical or classical education are guarded against in both Universities, by opening a road to honours in almost every other branch, such as divinity, moral philosophy, history, poetry.

The advantages of the Oxford system were thus pointed out to me in answer to my inquiries, by a talented member of that University. "It must be a great advantage to have a definite end in view, during the course of three years study preparatory to the degree of B.A.—on which all other reading may more or less be brought to bear. There must also be an advantage in the limitation of the books within a certain range; because, whilst on the one hand, it is sufficiently comprehensive to include some on all the subjects which most concern mankind—viz., religion, moral philosophy, history, and poetry—it is on the other hand, so restricted as to enable a man to acquire a thorough knowledge of most of these books. I suppose few books are known by any one with such accuracy and precision as Aristotle's Ethics, Politics, and Rhetoric, Thucydides and Herodotus are, by a man well-prepared for his B.A. examination. And I should think it was a great thing for a man once in his life, to have mastered such works completely." There is much also worthy of attention in a remark from the same individual, on the arrangement of the Oxford classes alphabetically, instead of, as is the Cambridge plan, by order of merit. "The arrangement of the several classes in alphabetical instead of the real order of the names, seems to possess advantages in making the object to be attained to consist, not *in victory over individuals*, but in the reaching of *a certain standard of excellence*." With regard to the theological examination, he well observed, "The institution of an examination in divinity, however elementary, both for those

who merely go up for a common B.A. and those who go up for honours, is a grand step gained, both as bearing witness to the importance of theology in a liberal education, and as preventing men going from Oxford into public life with that gross ignorance of the most elementary truths of Christianity, under which I should fear many come to the University. And this seems especially useful with regard to laymen, who are not likely to be again called upon to make themselves acquainted with the subjects in question." "There appears," he also suggested, "an advantage in the *variety* of subjects by excelling in which a man may acquire distinction. A good mathematician may get a mathematical first class—a good scholar may gain the Ireland scholarship—a good philosopher may gain, though not without some knowledge of scholarship, a first class in classics; whereas, if the contrary were the case, many men would be discouraged from attempting to gain University honours, and the result would be an increase of that body of men, always objectionable, who, having talents to distinguish themselves, either are wholly idle, or read in directions not connected with the University course of education."

Attentive consideration of the advantages here described, will shew the importance of a University course of education in promoting that discipline of the faculties of the understanding, without which all desultory reading, however wide its range, is comparatively ineffectual. To this object the various improvements which have been made at Oxford and Cambridge,¹

¹ It has been a point frequently canvassed, whether the Oxford or the Cambridge system is the most adapted to fashion the minds of students for the great practical purposes of after life. At the latter University, the principal feature of tuition seems to be that is *preparatory*; that its examinations for degrees do not so much demand

have doubtless been principally directed, while sufficient opportunity is afforded in each of laying the foundation of any profession, that may in after life be selected by the distinguished student. It will, however, be greatly

an extensive exercise of the mind upon things that will be *directly* useful to a young man in the world at large, or in his particular profession, as a *preparation* for acquaintance with them by accustoming the mental faculties to such habits of accuracy and abstraction, as will enable a person so trained, to acquire with a peculiar facility and clearness whatever is needed for social or professional duties. Thus the reason is engaged upon pursuits *indirectly* useful, with a view of its being enabled to grasp the *directly* useful afterwards with extraordinary ease and power. To this end, the principal subjects are mathematics and philology, whereby, though perhaps little wanted by students in general when they have left Cambridge, the understanding is strengthened and ability conferred to enable it to possess itself of every kind of practical knowledge. It should, however, at the same time be mentioned, that there are abundant collateral opportunities at this University, in the shape of lectures of the highest order, for a man to lay a good foundation in any particular branch of literature or science. Nor is theological tuition forgotten.

At Oxford, the *preparatory* theory is to a great extent pursued by the encouragement of logic, mathematics, and philology; yet it seems to have been a question with the designers of its method of examination, whether the notion of strengthening the *instrumental* powers of the mind might not be carried to an unsafe excess, if it were possible for a student to pass to his degree, a stranger to the chief subjects for which alone those instrumental powers are chiefly valuable. It is a nice point, and to be well considered, in an efficient educational theory; for though it is impossible to *prepare* and *furnish* the mind at the same time, yet it ought to have a taste of the future, in an acquaintance, however slight, with the real subjects affecting all mankind, such as theology, history, moral philosophy. At Cambridge this is provided for, rather by private College instruction, lectures, &c., than made part of the *grand* system of training for a degree. At Oxford it is mixed up with the *higher requisites* for a degree. Cambridge also expects some knowledge of this kind; but the *principal* thing regarded, is what has been called the *preparatory* instruction. If this be admitted to be the best mode, then

for the interest of these seats of learning, to see that they lead the age ; to which end they must provide that their divinity keeps pace at least with their science—and their principal scholars ought to make such a demonstration as shall put those brother collegians to shame, who, in this age of light, are, with a folly almost inconceivable, taking pains to retrograde into the dark places of Romish superstition and idolatry.

Cambridge in completeness of theory and practice is the first University in the world. And, if we look at the Church, the Bench, the Bar, the Senate, we shall see a proud list of her sons thus *prepared*, among the first practical men in existence. While, if *philosophy* be the after pursuit of any of her sons, the advantages they possess must be clear to all. Some persons, nevertheless, will consider the blending, even though somewhat incongruous, of the two plans at Oxford, the *preparatory* and the *practical*, as the safest. It is a curious question, and, as I have said in the text of this chapter, worthy of the attention of the class of men best calculated to treat it with the necessary information, experience, and ability.

PREFACE.

THE principal materials for this memoir were derived from the papers of the late Rev. Rowland Hill ; and in committing them to the press I am only fulfilling the design with which they were bequeathed to me. I have now presented to the public the biographies of three distinguished revivalists of the most important æra of religious history in this kingdom, since the period of the Reformation. They were men of equal zeal and piety, with only one great object, that of arousing a lethargic people from the awful moral torpor into which all classes had fallen ; but their good qualities were developed in very different ways, and under different circumstances. Their respective characters and exertions have enabled me to trace the threefold consequences of the efforts of a regular and irregular minister, and of a layman of birth and fortune who was a member of the British Parliament. In Mr. Walker of Truro, I have given an example of the first ; in Mr. Rowland Hill, of the second ; in the subject of these pages, of the third. I trust this

completion of the series, will meet with the same indulgence that has been accorded to the other two. My principal design has been to illustrate the hitherto imperfect history of the progress of the cause of religion, during the extraordinary times when these honoured individuals endeavoured to trim the lamp of reformed truth, which burnt with a dimness that threatened its total extinction. I have endeavoured to shew how their several modes of proceeding bore upon the same end; and this with a view of demonstrating that, however pure the intentions and fervent the spirits of zealous men may be, the greatest aggregate of good must eventually result from *orderly* proceedings. Yet at the same time, it has been my sincere aim to accord to the laborious and faithful of every description, the full meed of praise that is their due. Uncommon times demanded uncommon endeavours, and created numerous irregularities which we must regard with the eye of admiring charity, while we point out the dangers that invariably attend all departure from discipline. Hence it was, that Sir Richard Hill, though disposed to look favourably upon those who in the great emergencies of his days, pursued the course they thought best adapted to meet them, never ceased to remind both pastors and people of the incalculable value of the principles of the Church of England. He was a man little understood, because his views were far in advance of the age in which he lived; but he will be comprehended and appreciated now. His boldness, firmness, integrity, and disinterestedness will find their proper place in

public opinion ; and I am not without a hope that this humble attempt to do justice to his memory, may cause him to be regarded as an eminent example of devoted piety and honest patriotism. There were some peculiarities in his writings, arising out of the tone and spirit of a very singular epoch, which it would not be fair to measure by the standard of our more advanced state of evangelical knowledge. His sallies, also, of wit and humour, were intended either to shew that religion was unjustly accused of moroseness, or to render errors ridiculous when impenetrable by the weapons of argument. No man was capable of a loftier tone of pious sentiment, or exhibited a deeper experience of the vital renovating truths of the gospel. The amenity and polish of his manners, the benignity of his heart, the uprightness of his intentions, were acknowledged even by his opponents, and he went to the grave equally respected and regretted by persons of every grade of life. The general features of his character have been often faithfully delineated ; but a wrong colouring has been given them by writers who have regarded him through the medium of their own prejudices. I consider, therefore, that an impartial narrative of his active life, was wanted to fill a chasm in evangelical biography ; and I flatter myself that they who read it, will not consider me as saying too much of Sir Richard Hill, when I assert that in all essential points of character, he was a model of a Christian gentleman and an upright Senator. Be the various opinions of his doctrinal views what they may, he must also be es-

teemed as an effective honest champion of the principles of the Reformation.

High birth and fortune warrant give,
That such men write what they believe ;
And feeling first what they indite,
New credit give to ancient light.

Waller.

Acle, near Norwich, April 24, 1839.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. ROMAINE AT SHREWSBURY IN 1769. HIS SERMON AT ST. CHAD'S.
DR. ADAMS'S REPLY. MR. RICHARD HILL VINDICATES ROMAINE.
LETTER OF ROMAINE. SUBSCRIPTION. ITS SPIRIT AND VALUE.
DIVISIONS AMONGST THE REVIVALISTS. COMMENCEMENT OF THE
BREACH BETWEEN WESLEY AND WHITFIELD. THE ORIGIN OF IT.
ACCOUNT OF THIS WITH REFERENCE TO THE HISTORY OF THESE
PAGES. MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE OF 1744. REMARKS.

SERMON OF MR. ROMAINE.

THE success which attended Mr. Hill's defence of the pious Oxonians expelled in 1768, encouraged him to seize other occasions of supporting the truth; one of which was quickly afforded him by a visit of Mr. Romaine to his native county. The ministry of this excellent man had been very useful to him in London; it may therefore be imagined with what pleasure he welcomed him into Shropshire, and how delighted he was at his being permitted to preach at St. Chad's, one of the principal churches of the town of Shrewsbury. Mr. Romaine did not lose that opportunity of declaring the gospel of Christ without reserve, which excited, as it did at that time all over the kingdom, the bitterest hostility against him. Dr. Adams, the incumbent of the parish, followed him into the vestry and said in a very angry tone, "Sir, my congregation is not used to such doctrine, and I hope will never hear such again."

Mr. Romaine, although thus addressed in the presence of a good many people, received the rebuke with meekness, and merely replied, "Sir, this surely is neither a proper time nor place for disputes." A fortnight after, Dr. Adams delivered a violent sermon in reply; and it was supposed, that as he had thus *corrected* what he conceived to be the errors set before his own congregation, the contest would have ended here. In fact the dispute did subside for a time; but four months afterwards, he was prevailed upon to print his sermon and advertise it for sale in London. This roused the indignation of Mr. Richard Hill, and caused him to print a letter to Dr. Adams on his Sermon. This production was announced as "by the Author of *Pietas Oxoniensis*, and soon found its way to a fourth edition. Its aim was to shew that the doctrines of Mr. Romaine were the doctrines of the Church of England, and that those of his opponent were utterly inconsistent with that standard of truth he had subscribed as a minister of the establishment. Dr. Adams failed to state all the points of Mr. Romaine's sermon with which he was offended, professing to *forbear to mention particular tenets and unguarded expressions* contained in it. The acknowledgment of this omission Mr. Hill called an "ingenuous confession," and added, "I will as ingenuously inform you, that whatever other excuses may have been given for your dislike to that gentleman's sermon, I doubt not but it was chiefly owing to his so strenuously maintaining and defending the Divinity and Godhead of our blessed Saviour." He founded this surmise on certain expressions uttered by Dr. Adams to Mr. Romaine in the vestry, and a conversation which took place between him and the friends of the latter, on the road home and in his own house. There, Dr. Adams

was pressed hard on these points from the Articles and Liturgy, and particularly from the Communion Service, with the words, "That which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality." Finding it difficult to evade the force of these testimonies of his own Church, he answered hastily, "*The compilers of the Articles and the Liturgy were only fallible men, and Divinity is much better understood now than at the time of the Reformation.*" "You may remember, Sir," says Mr. Hill, "that hereupon the honesty of your confession was much commended; and had you in consequence of your disapprobation of the doctrines of the Church of England, immediately resigned all the rich preferments which you hold by your subscriptions to those very doctrines, in that very Church, the whole kingdom must have echoed with encomiums upon your honest, upright, and disinterested behaviour." But it seems that not only did Dr. Adams understate, if he did not actually deny, the divinity, and atonement of Christ, but that he became also the strenuous advocate of what is called *rational religion*. To his arguments Mr. Hill replied in a very convincing manner, but not altogether in the spirit best suited to engage his opponent's deliberate attention. Upon the whole, however, his letter displayed much reading and piety, as well as a bold determination to assist in upholding the truth. It was approved by Mr. Romaine, who, justly indignant at being accused of exceptionable doctrines without any statement of their nature, joined Mr. Hill in writing to Dr. Adams.

London, March 17. 1770.

REV. SIR,

As you have in the most public manner, both from the pulpit and the press, personally traduced me, as a setter forth of strange doctrines, tending at once to surprise the vulgar and to mislead the credulous; the most exceptionable of which doctrines you tell us you *forbear to mention*; you cannot think it unbecoming my office as a minister of Christ, to join the author of this letter,¹ in calling upon you to explain your meaning; since it must be allowed to be a very hard case to be so severely condemned in general terms, without giving me an opportunity of vindicating—not myself, for I desire to be out of the question—but the doctrines delivered in my sermon,—doctrines which I am persuaded in my conscience, are not only contained in the word of God, but are the very basis of that apostolical Church, in which you and I have the honor to be ministers.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your most humble servant,

WILLIAM ROMAINÉ,

Rector of Blackfriars.

One expression of Mr. Romainé's which gave offence was—that God had no *uncovenanted mercies*;—another, that there were *no little sins*; and also the remark, that God *could shew no mercy but through Christ*.² These phrases, together with his views of the divinity and atonement of the Son of God, seem to have raised the ire of the minister of St. Chad's, an occurrence that

¹ The printed letter of Mr. Hill.

² Though Mr. Romainé's meaning may be obvious to many persons, it would have been better if this last expression had been couched in more distinct terms.

would have happened in so many other places in those days, that it would have required scarcely more than a cursory notice in this narrative, but for the valuable remarks of Mr. Richard Hill on the subscription required from clergymen to the standard of the Church of England. It was well observed by an old writer¹ on this question, "If either state oaths on the one hand, or Church subscriptions on the other, once come to be made light of, and subtilties be invented to defend or palliate such gross insincerity, we may bid farewell to principles, and religion will be little else but disguised atheism." Upon this principle, which he quoted, Mr. Hill strongly inveighed against the assertion of Dr. Adams, that a "latitude of subscription seems to have been claimed and allowed from the beginning." With some humour he called the Doctor's avowed notions his *real* creed, and the articles he had subscribed, his *convenient* creed, whereby he held two livings. He drew up also a comparative view of each, to shew their utter discrepancy. And certainly with such divines belonging to her, the Church was in the lamentable condition described by South with so much feeling—"impugned from without, and betrayed from within." Dr. Adams went so far as to say, "It is still *pain and grief* to ingenuous minds to subscribe to forms, which in their first appearance they cannot approve. I must therefore earnestly join with those who wish to see the ministers of our Church *relieved from this burden*." Mr. Hill fully acquiesced in the opinion here expressed, that there were many clergymen in those days who did not approve the articles on their first appearance, but yet approved of them on a nearer view, as *approving* of the good things

¹ Waterland.

to be obtained by subscription. This was evident enough in their violent opposition to the "Methodists," who were directing their attention to what they had professed. One of these divines waited upon his Diocesan, to ask him what measures could be taken to stop those Methodists from preaching, when his Lordship wisely replied, "We had better let them alone, for they have *the Church* on their side." This was exactly the view inculcated by Mr. Richard Hill, in his constant appeals to the negligent *moralists* of his day, whom he entreated to compare the doctrines they taught, with the spiritual tenets of their own code. In dealing with what Dr. Adams had said about not approving the articles *at first appearance*, he thus indulged his characteristic love of humour. "Here I must beg leave to introduce a story, founded upon fact, of one whom I call *a real enthusiast*. This man's father built a house of stone, and after he had finished it, his son disliked both the materials and the colour of it, and mightily wished that it had been built with red bricks. Well, what should he do? It was too late to alter it, and to effect the change by human art was quite impracticable. Why, truly, he persuaded himself, that if he had but a proper degree of faith to believe it, this white stone house would soon become a red brick house. Accordingly out he goes and views the structure; still nothing appears but whited walls; he chides his unbelieving spirit, and views it a second time; when, behold, the house looks more and more of a reddish cast, and the mortar begins to appear between the joints of the bricks. And now nothing is wanting but the third review to turn the stone into perfect brick.—'Tis done, and the delighted visionary lives as comfortably in his imaginary

house of red brick, as if there really were not a white stone belonging to it.

“ With such like enthusiasts does this nation abound. Our good forefathers at the time of the Reformation, builded a Church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. This Church they walled round with Articles, Homilies, and the Liturgy, in order to keep out Arians, Pelagians, Socinians, &c. ; but many of her late born sons who live under her roof, and feed themselves at her table, not well relishing those articles, &c., set themselves to take another view of them, and so view and review them, till they work themselves up into a persuasion that those very doctrines which once appeared in such frightful colours, instead of discountenancing, were really intended as an introduction for every heresy, to which in their plain, literal, grammatical sense, they are so diametrically opposite. And so the poor dreaming enthusiasts at length become happily persuaded that white is black, and black white.” Odd as such an illustration may appear, it contained much of truth ; for it is certain that the fury of the *orthodox* party in those days, was excited by the laudable attempts made by the revivalists to bring the attention of the country and its spiritual teachers, to the acknowledged doctrines of the Church. We are under infinite obligations to Mr. Hill and others for the part they performed ; and above all, to the goodness of God in raising up those Reformers who left us such a standard, and made subscription thereto the condition of obtaining place in the sanctuary. Be it remembered also, that to avoid all cavil on these points, the Royal Declaration prefixed to our Articles forbids “ every preacher and minister whatever from putting his own sense and comment upon any of the Articles, or from

drawing them aside any way, and enjoins them to be taken in their plain, literal, and grammatical sense." On this Mr. Hill forcibly observed, " It is most certain that our Church by requiring all these solemn tests, subscriptions, and declarations from her ministers, and by denouncing such severe punishment on every delinquent who shall be found offending against the same, did hereby suppose that she had strongly fortified herself against the encroachments of all heretics and innovators whatever. Her pious Reformers were well convinced that oaths and subscriptions were things of a most awful nature, and not to be trifled with by any man who believed there was a God unto whom all hearts are open, and from whom no secrets are hid." " It is certain," he also proceeded, " that when the archbishops and bishops of both provinces, together with the whole body of the clergy in convocation assembled, subscribed and approved the Articles and Homilies in the year 1571, and the same were ratified by the Queen's authority, they no more thought that any honest ingenuous minds would call the Searcher of all hearts to bear witness of their unfeigned and hearty assent to the doctrines therein contained, if they did not, *ex animo*, believe those doctrines, than they thought that perjury and piety, truth and falsehood, were synonymous terms." In fact the deportment and preaching of that party in the Church to which Mr. Hill was opposed, were calculated to undermine the fundamental precepts of the Reformation, and would, in all human probability, have blighted the best hopes of our nation, but for the true and zealous churchmen who roused the people and clergy to consider the real tenor of the rules they had promised to follow. Heavenly truths were in danger, apparently at least, of being smothered by the rank growth of a moral

earth-born system, in which the divinity and atonement of Christ, the depravity and helplessness of man, justification by faith alone, and the absolute necessity of the work of the Holy Ghost to quicken, sanctify, and comfort the soul—all essential doctrines of the Church of England as well as of the Bible—were never mentioned except as examples of enthusiasm. If therefore God had not favored us with a pure standard of truth which the teachers of religion were obliged to subscribe, and to which its enlightened friends could appeal, the establishment of this country would most likely have been cut off as a withered branch, instead of bearing in these days of its vigorous growth, a mighty produce of celestial fruit. Hence in proving that the enemies of spiritual teaching in the Church, “condemned themselves out of their own mouths, knocked themselves down with their own weapons, and confronted themselves by their own subscriptions,” Mr. Richard Hill and his coadjutors did a service to the people and to religion, which is now deeply felt and ought to be cordially acknowledged. It is much to be regretted that these remonstrances were too often accompanied by uncourteous personalities; but they arose in some degree out of the peculiarities of the age, and the violent rancour with which the “Methodists” were assailed, as though they had been the pests instead of the deliverers of society.

I have now endeavoured to shew the value of subscription to the Articles of the Church in the dark days of the last century, and the advantage it gave the supporters of truth over its opposers in those times. And we may fearlessly contrast the then condition of our body spiritual with its useful and honored instrumentality now, which is owing, under God, to its impregnable standard. A few words therefore on the

intention of subscription will not be looked upon as irrelevant, in a day when its value is more and more felt and confessed. It is clear that the words of our Articles, &c. are to be taken in their plain literal sense, as was acknowledged in the reigns of Edward VI., Elizabeth, James I., and during part of that of Charles I. Yet, notwithstanding this, they are not wanting in that expansive power which enables them to embrace in very wide circle, multitudes who may have shades of difference in non-essentials. But the truths opposed most bitterly in the last century, were essential and fundamental; and to these the remarks of Hill, Romaine, and others, must be understood to refer. The statute of the 13th of Elizabeth requires that in order to a man's being capable of a benefice, he should read the Articles of the Church before the congregation, and declare his unfeigned assent to them. This must be acknowledged to be a positive declaration of the clergyman's own deliberate opinion, and not merely an obligation not to oppose the standard of his community, as it has been frequently construed. Yet there are some points of minor importance in which the literal and grammatical sense of the words subscribed, may be fairly allowed to appear to admit of different interpretations, and therefore two persons whose sentiments vary respecting them, may each assent without equivocation.¹ But there are vital points, such as the Trinity, the Godhead of Christ, the Personality of the Holy Ghost, Justification by Faith, the Atonement, Regeneration, &c. on which it is impossible to differ materially. These

¹ See the well known example of Art. III. given by Burnet in his Introduction to his celebrated Treatise, in allusion to which South, however, said with more wit than truth, the Bishop had given the Church "forty stripes save one."

are fundamental. Mede lays down two sorts of fundamental Articles—*of salvation—of ecclesiastical communion*. The former have a necessary influence on the acts and functions of a Christian life. Without a knowledge and belief of these, we can neither call upon the Father aright, nor have due reliance on the Saviour's mediation, nor enjoy the experimental consolations of real Christianity. Of this indispensable character are the points of belief just recited, relating to the person and offices of the Redeemer, and the work of the Spirit. They are necessary to all acts required for salvation, and an unqualified prominence is given them in our ecclesiastical pandect. But fundamentals of ecclesiastical communion may vary in their practical application, and yet be in a measure expressed in one and the same phraseology. While it is right they should remain as the symbols and badge of such as are in our pale; yet it is not of vital importance that they should be defined so distinctly and explicitly as the former, because they involve minor interests and are measured by less ends. The great beauty of our Articles consists in their brevity, simplicity, and decision as to essentials. Herein they are not only scriptural in doctrinal substance, but are upon the scriptural pattern; for the moral law is an epitome of *things to be done*, the Lord's Prayer of *things to be prayed for*; and our Articles are an epitome of things to be believed. They are positive in the stress laid on fundamentals of salvation, but open a charitable latitude as to the varying minor opinions of Christians who are of "one spirit." May subscription then never cease to be enforced! It proved its value in the gloomy days under our present notice; it tends to cement us now, and is a bulwark against the aggression of the many errors that hover around us at all times.

While it strengthens the walls, it does not curtail the limits of our Sion ; for, as Dr. Chalmers well observed in his recent lectures on Establishments, the differences between us and many pious nonconformists are so small, that the question may well be asked of them, “ Why keep yourselves out ? ”

That the Articles of our Church utterly exclude the errors of Arius, Pelagius, and Socinus, is unquestionable. But Mr. Hill and many of his friends considered that no Arminian could be a Churchman, but that our standard was strictly Calvinistic. This opinion gave rise to the controversy between them and the Wesleyans, which it will be my duty to narrate with unprejudiced fairness. Arminius was a Dutchman, reader of divinity at Leyden in the beginning of the 17th century.¹ He held the divinity of Christ and the doctrine of the Trinity, fully and distinctly, and acknowledged that man was born in sin, but denied the *total* corruption of his nature, maintaining that he had still a *freedom of will* to turn to God. But he qualified his assertion by allowing that he could not do it without the assistance of grace ; which view has been looked upon by many, as coinciding with that expressed in the tenth Article of our Church, which declares the necessity of “ the grace of God by Christ preventing us that we may have a good will.” As to the doctrine of election, he held it to be conditional, and that the elect might fall. His doctrines occasioned a great commotion, and were canvassed at the Synod of Dort, in the year 1618. To this Synod king James I. despatched five² of the most eminent British

¹ 1605.

² The representatives of the English Church who went to this Synod were George Careleton, D. D., then Bishop of Landaff, afterwards of Chichester ; Joseph Hall, D. D., then Dean of Worcester,

divines, who united with other Protestant Churches in condemning the tenets of Arminius, as not only contrary to the honor and grace of God and repugnant to the Scriptures, but to all their national confessions of faith. Their feelings may be also gathered from what Dr. Abbot, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, and brother to the then Archbishop of Canterbury, said on the subject :—" The foul vapours of Arminianism blew over from the Dutch coast and so infatuated some of our divines, that, forsaking the beaten and approved path of faith, they betook themselves to the crooked ways and precipices of Arminius, destroying the Articles of religion with their tenets, which they had confirmed by their subscriptions." Thus commenced the disputes which have so much injured the Church of Christ, causing believers to say " I am of Arminius, and I of Calvin," as if Christ were divided. It is to be lamented that these divisions kept people at a distance through the sound of a name, who, on conversing with each other, would have agreed in the main truths of salvation.¹ They made also even the charitable Hill rank with Arians, Pelagians, and Socinians, Arminians so called, whom he would have found in an interview almost as *Calvinistic* as himself, in their willingness to say, " If God had not chosen us, our fallen nature would never have allowed us to choose him." Such persons therefore, named either *Arminians* or *Calvinists*, and yet probably going the lengths of nei-

afterwards Bishop of Exeter and Norwich; John Davenant, D. D., then Margaret Professor, and Master of Queen's College, Cambridge, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury; Samuel Ward, D. D., then Master of Sidney College, Cambridge, and Archdeacon of Taunton. Dr. Hall was taken ill, and returned to England, and Dr. Goad, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury, was sent in his stead.

¹ We have a striking example of this, in the well known conversation between Mr. Simeon of Cambridge and John Wesley.

ther, might have united, as they are disposed to do now, in the enlarged membership of the Church of England. Would to God these names were for ever obliterated from the Christian vocabulary, and the five points of each party merged in the comprehensive standard it is our privilege to enjoy, and which is framed so as to receive all men who hold the essentials of true doctrine, combined with a willing spirit of obedience to wholesome discipline.

The condition of Great Britain in the early days of Mr. Richard Hill, afforded scope enough for zealous exertion to all the champions of the gospel, who ought to have seen that they had more public grounds of union than private ones of difference. But they became unhappily disunited, and wasted in party disputes the energies they should have directed to the great common object of promoting the religious welfare of a depraved and ignorant people. The history of their divisions affords a melancholy proof of the frailty of the best of men, and of the force of prejudice over the human mind. Yet in all cases where the differing parties met and conversed, they found that they had misconstrued each other in some important particulars, which led to apologies, explanations, softening down of hard phrases, with expressions of mutual regret at many things that had passed on either side. Whitfield closed his career by choosing Wesley, from whom he had separated and whose doctrines he had condemned, above all other men, for the preacher of his funeral sermon. In the same way will all true Christians deplore their bickerings on matters not vital, as they stand on the brink of the world to come, and see how their follies have clogged the wheels of the gospel chariot. Indeed it is with pain that I approach the subject of the controversy which

must now engage our attention ; but the biography of Sir Richard Hill would be incomplete without it, and a record of the zeal and of the mistakes of each party, will have its uses both of encouragement and warning.

The foundation of the theological disputes in which the brothers Richard and Rowland Hill occupied so prominent a situation, was unquestionably laid in the separation of Whitfield from John Wesley in the year 1741, when Mr. Richard Hill was a child ; but these particular controversies did not break out till the very year in which Whitfield died, or they would most likely have been checked by his master hand. The breach between him and Wesley just alluded to, was both singular and humiliating ; but like the jar of the natural elements, had perhaps its uses upon the general system in preventing extremes on either side. A recent biographer¹ of Whitfield says on this subject, " Had they been united in either extreme, truth would have made less progress. As joint Arminians, they would have spread Pelagianism ; and as joint Calvinists they would have been *hyper*, but not antinomian. It was well, therefore, that they modified each other ; for they were two suns which could not have fixed in one meridian, without setting on fire the whole course of sound theology." Be this as it may, it was still a tempest, and when one of the suns set in the other hemisphere² the storm became a very hurricane in this.

The history of the whole dispute is very extraordinary, both as respects the manner in which the fire was kindled, and the way in which, to use Whitfield's expression, "busy bodies blew up the coals." In August 1739, Whitfield went to America, where he founded his well

¹ Philip's Life of Whitfield, p. 210.

² Whitfield died in America in 1770.

known Orphan-house, and made extensive circuits producing various effects, one of which was a revival of the zealous spirit at Northampton. While thus engaged, he caught the tone and imbibed the opinions of the great, the searching, but too gloomy Jonathan Edwards, whose *Treatise on "Religious Affections"* will ever remain as a monument of his almost superhuman insight into Christian character. Some of his sermons, however, are painful evidences of a state of mind occasionally chilled and clouded by the mists of ultraism. Compared with this gifted man, the other writers of his stamp in America have been, as it was remarked by Robert Hall, "but as insects that swarmed in his carcase." His "*Treatise on the Will*" was too deep a book for Whitfield; and the probability is, that the author himself was somewhat out of his own depth when he wrote it. No wonder then that Whitfield when he first came in contact with Edwards, "winced a little under his metaphysical probe;" but at last he adopted his Calvinistic views, though it may be fairly doubted if he ever fully understood them as their defender, any more than Wesley did as their opponent. The same may be also said of many who have followed far behind in their respective wakes.

The polemics on each side announced themselves respectively as Calvinist and Arminian, but neither one nor the other of them adopted in full the tenets usually implied in these names. The Whitfieldians did not advocate the doctrine of reprobation; the Wesleyans willingly acknowledged the sinfulness of human nature, its guilt, and pollution, with the necessity of divine grace to direct and purify the will. But their phraseology was ill selected, and their doctrine of perfection altogether indefensible upon any grounds connected with the right meaning of that word. Whitfield thought it his duty

on arriving in England, to make known the opinions which had been confirmed in his mind during his sojourn in America, and bore with extreme patience the cutting severance of long friendships which this declaration cost him. Some of his once attached hearers ran past him while preaching in Moorfields, as if his breath conveyed a pestilence, and others, who had in times past hung upon his lips for every word he uttered, stood staring in his face with their fingers in their ears, to shew their abhorrence of his new sentiments. The least that could be expected under these circumstances, was the painful breach that soon ensued; and men who had never read a page of Calvin¹ in their lives, or of Arminius either, began fighting for their respective tenets with a most unchristian violence. The Wesleys commenced with "We will drive John Calvin out of Bristol," even before Whitfield went to America, who previously to his journey, conjured them to be silent on topics which might lead to their being "divided among themselves;" for at that time Whitfield somewhat favoured the doctrine of election, though he was silent upon it in his sermons, to prevent controversy. Wesley met his remonstrance by a superstitious appeal to sortilege. He drew lots upon the question, *preach and print, or be silent*. The lot decided the former, but the printing did not take place till Whitfield had left England. In his reply to what Wesley sent forth, he revealed under the influence of the moment, a private transaction of a similar kind which had exhibited the folly of having recourse to the practice of drawing lots. It was this. In 1736, the vessel which brought Wesley back from America passed that which was carrying Whitfield out, in the Downs. These

¹ "Whitfield," says Philip, "assured Wesley when they began to differ, that he had never read a page of Calvin!"

two eminent evangelists crossed each other without recognition; but when Wesley landed he found it was not too late to communicate with his fellow labourer. What he had experienced in the other hemisphere, induced him to think that Whitfield would do more good by staying at home than by going to Georgia, but he referred the question to *chance*! The result he communicated to Whitfield in a letter containing the lot drawn.—*Let him return to England.* This he called “asking counsel of God!” However, the less superstitious Whitfield had made up his mind and proceeded on his way. Wesley afterwards partly acknowledged that it was a wrong lot, but made this singular excuse, “Though God never before gave me a wrong lot, yet *perhaps he suffered me to have such a lot at that time, to try what was in your heart.*” But Whitfield said pointedly, “It was plain you had a wrong lot given you here, and justly, because you tempted God in drawing one.” Still the whole was a private affair between these two zealous men, and Whitfield was not justified, as he afterwards most penitently acknowledged, in revealing it to the world. Wesley’s remark was sufficiently cutting and not unmerited—“He had said enough of what was wholly foreign to the question, to make an open and probably irreparable breach between him and me, seeing ‘for a treacherous wound, and for the betraying of secrets, every friend will depart.’”¹ This observation was made in an interview with Whitfield, in adverting to the result of which Wesley observes, “I most approved of his plainness of speech.” In fact, he had plainly said to his old friend and coadjutor, “You and I preach two different gospels, and therefore I cannot

¹ Wesley’s Journal, April 4, 1741.

join you or give you the right hand of fellowship, but must publicly preach against both you and your brother, whenever I preach at all. But, Sir," said a friend of Wesley, who was present, "you promised only a few days ago, that whatever your private opinion might be, you would never publicly preach against them." To this he replied, "That promise was only an effect of human weakness, and I am now of another mind." Wesley justly called this "the putting of weapons into their hands, who loved neither the one nor the other;" but the breach was permitted, and, as I have before observed, was not without its uses. Moreover, whatever Whitfield might have been disposed to do with regard to other topics, he never could have passed unnoticed Wesley's absurd doctrine of perfection, about which its originator was not a little sore, as well he might be, when his sortilege and other weaknesses proved him to have been no more than others an exemplification of it in his own person. Neither can we for a moment vindicate the rashness of his great opponent. The spirit of both, and of their respective partisans, was utterly wrong; and so was that in which the controversy thus begun was perpetuated after Whitfield's voice was hushed in the silence of death. Southey says truly, that "Wesley's was a heart in which resentment never could strike root;" and therefore, upon Whitfield's acknowledgment of his regret, enmity soon ceased, though they came no closer in opinion. In fact, it was determined by the former that a solemn record of his views should be entered in the minutes of a conference. This took place at the well-known Foundry, on Monday, June 25, 1744, and five succeeding days, as appears in the following extract from Wesley's Journal:—"Monday, 25, and the five following days, we spent in conference with

many of our brethren, come from several parts, who desire nothing but to save their own souls, and those that hear them." In the "Minutes of Conversations" on that occasion, are these questions and answers :—

" Q. 17. Have we not, then, unawares, leaned too much towards Calvinism ?

" A. We are afraid we have.

" Q. 18. Have we not leaned also towards Antinomianism ?

" A. We are afraid we have.

" Q. 19. What is Antinomianism ?

" A. The doctrine that makes void the law through faith."

But for the allusion made to these Minutes sixteen years afterwards, it would have been impossible to have conceived the meaning of such queries and replies as these ; for certainly there is no sign of any leaning towards the doctrines of Calvin, or towards Antinomianism, in the account of the previous proceedings of the Wesleys or their followers. The charge of Antinomianism¹ was repelled by

¹ In Question 20, it is asked of Antinomianism, "What are the main pillars hereof?"

A. 1. That Christ abolished the moral law.

2. That therefore Christians are not obliged to observe it.

3. That one branch of Christian liberty, is liberty from obeying the commandments of God.

4. That it is bondage to do a thing because it is commanded, or forbear it because it is forbidden.

5. That a believer is not obliged to use the ordinances of God, or to do good works.

6. That a preacher ought not to exhort to good works ; not unbelievers, because it is hurtful ; nor believers, because it is needless.

Such tenets as these were never held by Whitfield, the Hills, or any person connected with them.

the Calvinists¹ with just indignation. In truth, they who called themselves Calvinists, and they who professed to be Arminians, were strictly speaking, neither one nor the other; and the terms seemed to be chosen as mere *noms de guerre*, in this melancholy combat of opinions. No persons, for example, more freely *invited* sinners to Christ than the followers of Whitfield, or appeared to have a greater dread of entering on the question of reprobation as stated in the Institutes of Calvin. A real Arminian also must deny *total* depravity; but Wesley held "We are all born with a sinful *devilish* nature."² What could a Calvinist say more? There were certainly many points on which these parties did entirely differ; but their calling themselves Calvinists on one side and Arminians on the other, led to mutual misrepresentations, which were most injurious to the nascent revival of their days, and have continued to be detrimental down to the present times.

This was the commencement of that celebrated controversy, in which Mr. Richard Hill and his brother Rowland took so conspicuous a share, when it broke out again in 1770, and which it is the province of a faithful biographer to narrate; and the more so, because the conduct of the principal subject of the present memoir has been often misstated. Both sides were unquestionably carried into unbecoming bitterness and personalities, which, to their honour, they each acknowledged when the sunshine of their common piety had ripened in them a savour of sweeter, gentler godliness. Wesley's ardour developed itself in various ways; in extravagance

¹ Mr. Rowland Hill said of Antinomianism, "It is a *nasty* religion." One of the last expressions, too, on his death-bed was an indignant testimony against it.

² Minutes of Conversation, 1744. Answer to Q. 15.

of imagination, in the foolish doctrine of perfection, and in a pugnacious spirit, the first and last of which mistakes were much moderated, if not extinguished, in his maturer days. Whitfield's was a hasty temperament, but when his first ebullition subsided, he quickly changed into the mood of melting tenderness, and no man more readily acknowledged and entreated pardon for his errors. There is reason to believe that Wesley attacked the doctrines of his great cotemporary, because he was piqued at the rejection of his favourite tenet of perfection. What therefore thus commenced, was not likely to proceed satisfactorily or creditably, and though repressed for a time, was sure, while the cause remained, to break out again. Southey well observes, "The reconciliation with Whitfield was perhaps produced more by a regard to appearances on both sides, than by any feeling on either. Such a wound as had been made in their friendship always leaves a scar, however well it may have healed." The peace between the Methodists and Calvinists was not, however, disturbed till the year in which Whitfield died, and shortly after that event the conflict became more vehement. The circumstances of that extraordinary controversy, and the part taken in it by Mr. Richard Hill, will be narrated impartially in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONFERENCE OF 1770. OBJECTIONABLE MINUTES. THEIR CONSEQUENCES. WHITFIELD'S DEATH. WESLEY'S SERMON. A CONVERSATION IN A CONVENT ON WESLEY'S MINUTES. OBSERVATIONS OF MR. HILL. BRISTOL CONFERENCE OF 1771. DECLARATION. CONDUCT OF OLIVERS. MR. SHIRLEY. MR. HILL'S OPINION OF THE DECLARATION. WESLEY'S CONTRADICTIONS. SPIRIT OF MR. RICHARD HILL. BLAMEABLE CONDUCT OF WESLEY AND TOPLADY. INTERVIEW BETWEEN MR. HILL AND WESLEY. FALSE RUMOURS RESPECTING IT. MR. HILL'S LETTERS TO MR. FLETCHER. TRIBUTE TO FLETCHER AS A PASTOR.

CONFERENCE OF 1770.

WHILE Whitfield was absent in America, Wesley held the celebrated conference of 1770. It commenced on August 7, and ended the following Friday. Upon the publication of its minutes, the controversy between the followers of Whitfield and the Wesleys broke out again with more violence than ever. The cause was the revival of the declaration of 1744, that the Methodist preachers had leaned too much towards Calvinism. An agreement had been made some years before, that the differing parties should, as far as they could conscientiously, use the same phrases in the pulpit, when treating on points as to the tenor of which they were substantially of the same mind. Articles of peace, as they were called,

were entered into ; but Charles Wesley, with his accustomed foresight, endorsed the paper containing them, "Vain Agreement." Howell Harris, the Welch Calvinist, was the principal coadjutor of Whitfield who promoted these articles ; but there were some among the Wesleyans to whom this peace between the parties was far from agreeable. More than ten years before, the Irishman, Thomas Walsh,¹ had persuaded John Wesley that he was leaning towards Calvinism, in admitting that some persons might be elected unconditionally to eternal life, though not to the necessary exclusion of any others ; and that there might be a state attainable here below, from which a man could not finally fall. These and other considerations were deemed sufficient reasons for a review of the case ; and accordingly the following declarations were sent out by the Conference of 1770 :—

"Take heed to your doctrine.

"We said in 1744, 'We have leaned too much toward Calvinism.'

"Wherein ?

"1. With regard to *man's faithfulness*. Our Lord himself taught to use the expression. And we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert, on his authority, that if a man is not *faithful in the unrighteous mammon*, God will not give him the true riches.

"2. With regard to *working for life*. This also our Lord has expressly commanded us. *Labour, ἵπναζεσθε*, literally *work, for the meat that endureth to everlasting life*. And in fact every believer, till he comes to glory, works *for* as well as *from* life.

¹ See an account of this remarkable man in my Life of Mr. Walker, of Truro—Second Edition.

“ 3. We have received it as a maxim that ‘ a man is to do nothing in order to justification.’ Nothing can be more false. Whosoever desires to find favour with God, should *cease from evil and learn to do well*. Whoever repents, should do *works meet for repentance*. And if this is not *in order* to find favour, what does he do them for ?

“ Review the whole affair.

“ 1. Who of us is *now* accepted of God ?

“ He that now believes in Christ, with a loving obedient heart.

“ 2. But who among those that never heard of Christ ?

“ He that feareth God, and worketh righteousness according to the light he has.

“ 3. Is this the same with ‘ He that is sincere ?’

“ Nearly, if not quite.

“ 4. Is not this ‘ Salvation by works ?’

“ Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a *condition*.

“ 5. What have we then been disputing about, for these thirty years ?

“ I am afraid, about words.

“ 6. As to *merit* itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid : we are rewarded, *according to our works*, yea, *because of our works*. How does this differ from *for the sake of our works* ? And how differs this from *secundum merita operum* ? As our works *deserve* ? Can you split this hair ?

“ I doubt, I cannot.

“ 7. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions, is drawn from matter of fact. God does in fact justify those who by their own confession, neither

feared God nor wrought righteousness. Is this an exception to the general rule?

“It is a doubt God makes any exception at all. But how are we sure that the person in question never did fear God and work righteousness? His own saying so is not proof: for we know how all convinced of sin undervalue themselves in every respect.

“8. Does not talking of a justified or a sanctified state tend to mislead men? Almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in one moment? Whereas we are every hour and every moment pleasing or displeasing to God, *according to our works*? According to the whole of our inward tempers, and outward behaviour.”

Such were the extraordinary declarations in the minutes of this important conference, of which even Watson¹ acknowledges “that they gave the appearance of inconsistency to Mr. Wesley’s opinions, and indicated a tendency to run to one extreme, in order to avoid another.” No sooner were they made known, than they excited a commotion unparalleled in the history of modern controversies, and unhappily characterized by uncharitable violence. It was a perfect uproar. Lady Huntingdon was indignant beyond measure, and called upon all the students and masters of her college at Trevecca, either to disavow these Minutes in writing, or to quit the college. Mr. Fletcher, the superintendent, gave in his opinion, acknowledging the wording of the Minutes to be unguarded, but vindicating their substance. He accordingly withdrew from his post to become a champion on the other side, sincerely believing that he should

¹ In his *Life of Wesley*.

be able to give "a check to Antinomianism." However, the principal persons attacked abhorred this monstrous error as much as he did, and were most unfairly accused of favouring it. Nor was the serious alarm of Lady Huntingdon unfounded, since Wesley was brought to acknowledge his expressions not to have been "sufficiently guarded," and Fletcher confessed they wore "a new aspect," and that at first they appeared to him "unguarded, if not erroneous." Poor Whitfield probably little thought what a tumult was about to be raised. He was dying in America;¹ and in his last hours breathed peace and love to his old antagonist, choosing him to preach his funeral sermon, and bequeathing to him a memorial of his regard. The inhabitants of the province of Georgia mourned deeply over Whitfield's removal, and indicated their respect for the memory of their affectionate and zealous missionary, by every possible appendage of grief and reverence. All the black cloth in the stores was bought up, and the pulpit and desks of the church, the branches, the organ loft, as well as the pews of the Governor and Council, were covered with black. The public functionaries also put on the deepest mourning, and went in procession from the State House to the Church, where the organ played a funeral dirge as the solemn train came in. Wesley received the announcement of his death on Saturday, Nov. 10, 1770, and retired to Lewisham on the Monday following to write his funeral sermon. The next Sunday he went to preach it at the chapel in Tottenham-court-road. "An immense multitude," he says in his Journal, "was gathered together from all corners of the town. I was at first afraid that a great part of

¹ He died of Asthma, Sept. 30, 1770.

the congregation would not be able to hear; but it pleased God to strengthen my voice, that even those at the door heard distinctly. It was an awful season: all were as still as night: most appeared to be deeply affected, and an impression was made on many, which one would hope will not speedily be effaced. The time appointed for my beginning at the Tabernacle was half an hour after five, but it was quite filled at three, so I began at four. At first the noise was exceedingly great, but it ceased when I began to speak; and my voice was again so strengthened, that all who were within could hear, unless an accidental noise hindered here or there for a few moments. O that all may hear the voice of Him, with whom are the issues of life and death, and who so loudly, by this unexpected stroke, calls all his children to love one another." Still the admirers of Whitfield felt that they could have nothing more to do with Wesley, while his objectionable Minutes remained as they were.

Among these, no person expressed a stronger sense of indignation than Mr. Richard Hill. He adopted a singular and original method of testing the Wesleyan opinions. In the summer of 1771, he went with his friend Mr. Powys and a clergyman to Paris, carrying out with him a copy of the Minutes. While there, he was curious to see what impression they would make on a Roman Catholic, so he took his friends to the convent of English Benedictine Monks, when the following conversation took place between two of them and Father Welsh, the Superior:—

Clergyman. Sir, I suppose you have often heard of the different sects amongst the Protestants in England?

Superior. Very often, Sir.

Clergyman. Have you ever heard of the Methodists?

Superior. Yes, Sir, very often.

Clergyman. I can shew you their tenets, settled by some of their chiefs at their last Conference at London. Here they are.

After the Superior had carefully perused them, he was asked by the

Clergyman. Do you agree with that doctrine, Sir?

Superior. No, indeed, Sir, we do not hold such principles as those.

Clergyman. What fault do you find with them?

Superior. They are too near Pelagianism.

Mr. Hill. The principles of the Roman Catholic Church are nearer the Church of England than those?

Superior. A great deal, Sir. Those of that paper are too near Pelagianism; the author is a Pelagian.

Clergyman. What do you think of the author's asserting that those who are convinced of sin undervalue themselves in every respect; do you think sinners can undervalue themselves?

Superior. No, by no means; having too high thoughts of themselves makes them live in sin.

Clergyman. Can we have any good in us before Justification?

Superior. Certainly not; our Justification is by Christ alone; for if St. Paul says, that we are not sufficient of ourselves to have a good thought, how much less to perform good works?

Clergyman. Can we cease to do evil and learn to do well, before Faith?

Superior. No, we cannot.

Clergyman. St. Paul saith, whatsoever is not of faith, is sin.

Superior. Undoubtedly.

Clergyman. I wish, Sir, you would favour us with strictures upon that paper in writing?

Superior. Sir, I am so taken up that I have not time, or I could say a great deal upon it.

Mr. Hill. Your doctrine is nearer that of the Protestants?

Superior. O, Sir, a great deal; that is Pelagianism.

As soon as Mr. Hill returned to England, which was after the Conference at Bristol of 1771, he printed this conversation, which had led him to conclude that the principles of the extract from the minutes of the former Conference, were "too rotten for even a Papist to rest upon," and that "Popery was about the midway between Protestantism and Mr. J. Wesley." While, however, Mr. Hill was preparing his observations for the press, he had become acquainted with a "manifesto" of Wesley, issued from Bristol, in which he complained of misrepresentation, and explained the objectionable phraseology that had raised such a tumult. The cause of this declaration was a circular letter from the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, brother and chaplain of Lady Huntingdon, to the serious clergy and others, calling on them to go in a body to the Bristol Conference, and "insist upon a formal recantation of the said minutes, and in case of a refusal, to sign and publish their protest against them." Wesley notices the circumstance with great brevity in his Journal of 1771. All he says is, "Tuesday 6, we had more preachers than usual at the Conference, in consequence of Mr. Shirley's circular letter. At ten on Thursday morning he came, with nine or ten of his friends: we conversed freely for about two hours, and I believe they were satisfied that we were not such "dreadful heretics" as they imagined, but were tolerably sound in the faith." At first Wesley felt indignant at the circular, feeling that before it was

published, he ought to have been applied to by its author to declare what he really meant by the opinions he had expressed in the offensive minutes. Moreover, he was disposed to let Mr. Shirley and his brethren know, that they had not proved their right to come to the Conference in the way designed, and that there was some probability of a refusal to have any intercourse with them if they came with hostile demonstrations. Upon this Lady Huntingdon and her brother acknowledged their too great haste, and disclaimed all intention to approach the Conference, except with fraternal feelings and a friendly wish to obtain a right understanding. Mr. Shirley and his friends were immediately *invited* to attend without any further application on their parts, as the letters of submission written by Lady Huntingdon and him were deemed satisfactory. Accordingly they appeared on the third day of the Conference. When they entered, Mr. Wesley opened with prayer. This ended, Mr. Shirley asked him if Lady Huntingdon's letter and his had been read to the Conference. He was told they had not, and requested permission to read them, which was granted. "I hope," he said, "the submission thus made is satisfactory to the gentlemen present." To this they replied in the affirmative, but urged that as the circular had been printed and made public, so ought the apology. To this Mr. Shirley consented in a most Christian spirit, and afterwards fulfilled his promise. Wesley then stood up and made a long speech, in which he gave a sketch of his ministerial career, and declared that he had ever been strenuous in advocating justification by faith, maintaining at the same time that there was nothing in the minutes that ought to have been construed into any thing else. He then added what he might as well have left out,—that

he had been treated with ingratitude, and that he firmly believed the present opposition to be in a great measure personal. In reply, Mr. Shirley positively denied this assertion, and with great gentleness of manner, solemnly assured all present, that with respect to himself, his opposition was solely to the doctrines promulgated, and not to Mr. Wesley or any other individual. To this the persons present signified that they gave credit; after which Mr. Shirley proceeded to speak to the point. "I informed them," he says, "of the great and general offence the minutes had given; that I had numerous protests and testimonies against them sent me from Scotland, and from various parts of these kingdoms; that it must seem very extraordinary indeed, if so many men of sense and learning should be mistaken, and there was nothing really offensive in the plain natural import of the minutes; that I believed they themselves, whatever meaning they might have intended, would allow that the more obvious meaning was reprehensible; and therefore I recommended to them, nay I begged and intreated them for the Lord's sake, that they would go as far as they could with a good conscience, in giving the world satisfaction." He then proposed a declaration he had drawn up, assuring them he meant to give no offence. Leave was given him to read it; and when Wesley had made a few trifling alterations in the wording, he consented, with fifty-three of his preachers, to sign it. One or two only were against it; and amongst them Thomas Olivers, the Welchman, who was converted under Mr. Whitfield's preaching, and used to follow him in the streets with such veneration, that he could "scarce refrain from kissing the very prints of his feet." For some reason, however, he met with a rebuff when he wished to join the society; but

he was at length admitted into that of the Wesleyans at Bradford. As soon as he had obtained entrance there, he professed to have seen at the bottom of the hill coming into the town, a ray of light like the shining of a star, which broke through an opening in the heavens and gleamed upon him. Then all his burdens fell off, and he felt so light that he could almost literally have fled up to the skies. There were some good points about Olivers ; but at Bristol he was very violent. He stirred up a strong debate in opposition to the declaration, and at last refused to sign it, after talking the most arrant nonsense. But this was one of the penalties Wesley paid for his want of firmness in 1755 and 1756,¹ about his Lay Preachers, which gave liberty to "Thomas Olivers the cobbler," and others, thus to get out of their places. This man maintained before the whole Conference, that the Christian's *second* justification at the day of judgment is *by works* ; and therefore he could not declare, as the majority did, that " he had no trust or confidence but in the alone merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for justification or salvation, either in life, death, or the day of judgment." Wesley and his fifty-three preachers, however, rightly thought otherwise ; and it is clear that Olivers and his associates ought to have been dismissed from the society. The declaration signed was as follows :

" *Bristol, Aug. 9, 1771.*

Whereas the doctrinal points in the minutes of a Conference held in London, August 7, 1770, have been

¹ See the History of these Conferences and the curious correspondence relating to them, in my *Life of Walker of Truro*. Second Edition, 1838. Seeleys.

understood to favor "Justification by Works," now the Rev. John Wesley and others assembled in Conference, do declare that *we had no such meaning*, and that we abhor the doctrine of "Justification by Works," as a most perilous and abominable doctrine. And as the said minutes are not sufficiently guarded in the way they are expressed, we hereby solemnly declare in the sight of God, that we have no trust or confidence, but in the alone *merits* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for justification or salvation, either in life, death, or the day of judgment. And though no one is a real Christian believer, and consequently cannot be saved, who doeth not good works where there is time and opportunity ; yet our works have no part in meriting or purchasing our justification from first to last, either in whole or part."

When this declaration was agreed to, it was said to Mr. Shirley, "Now, sir, you must make some public acknowledgment that you have mistaken the meaning of the minutes." He hesitated a little ; for though he desired to "do every thing he could consistently with truth and a good conscience, for the establishment of peace and Christian fellowship," yet he was afraid to sign any paper wherein he might seem to countenance the minutes in their obvious sense. And certainly the question was, not what Mr. Wesley meant by the wording of them, but what was the sense in which any unbiassed person, like, for instance, the superior in the French convent, would be sure to take them ? One of the preachers, however, rather nettled by Mr. Shirley's hesitation, asked him, "Sir, do you not believe Mr. Wesley to be an honest man ?" He was distressed at the question, and declared his "confidence in Mr. Wesley's integrity," and promised to give the best satisfac-

tion he could. Accordingly, a few days afterwards, he sent him the following note : " Mr. Shirley's Christian respects wait on Mr. Wesley. The declaration agreed to in Conference the 8th day of August, 1771, has convinced Mr. Shirley he had mistaken the meaning of the doctrinal points in the minutes of the Conference held in London, August 7, 1770 ; and he hereby wishes to testify the full satisfaction he has in the said declaration, and his hearty concurrence and agreement with the same.—Mr. Wesley is at full liberty to make what use he pleases of this. August 10, 1771."

It should be observed that before Mr. Shirley and his friends left the Conference, they concluded with prayer and many warm professions of mutual peace and love. " For my own part," says he, " I was perfectly sincere, and thought this one of the happiest, and most honourable days of my life." Mr. Shirley indeed little deserved to be attacked as he afterwards was by Mr. Fletcher ; for as Watson justly observes, he " never departed from the meekness of a Christian and the manners of a gentleman." But even the mild countenance of Fletcher was clouded, as the gloomy tempest of controversy gathered around him.

The Bristol declaration was far from satisfying all who were displeased with the minutes of 1770, and particularly Mr. Richard Hill. " I confess," he said on the occasion, " I had for many years a high veneration for Mr. Wesley, even though I differed from him in those points deemed Calvinistical. But his late minutes have obliged me to form very different sentiments of him ; and these sentiments are so far from being changed into more favorable ones by the late declaration at Bristol, that I am thereby more than ever convinced of his unsettled principles, and prevaricating

disposition." To this he added, "I shall not enter into any dispute with the author of the circular letter, concerning the propriety or impropriety of the printed paper dated 'Bath,' and signed 'Walter Shirley.' Suffice it to say, that I was not present when that paper was drawn up; nor did I know the contents of it till it was sent to me after its publication. I readily acknowledge that Mr. J. Wesley, as leader of a sect dissenting from the Articles of the Church of England, has a right to maintain his own principles; and yet I think it the duty of every Christian, so far as he believes those principles to be unsound and dangerous, to testify his abhorrence of them." These remarks Mr. Hill appended to a little pamphlet, containing the conversation with the superior of the English Benedictines; and he also declared his belief that a permanent union with one who had contradicted himself so often as Wesley, was impossible. He also observed that "whoever would presume to bear an open honest testimony against any of his dogmatical decisions, or mention his strange prevarications, is immediately held forth as a persecuting, vindictive, blood-thirsty monster, actuated by cursed party spirit, and under the influence of Satan himself."¹

¹ "These mild and dove-like expressions," said Mr. Hill, "have lately been vented from the shop of a staunch admirer of Mr. Wesley—probably one of his *perfect* class—in a printed circular letter, dated July 2, 1771."

Certainly never did any divine contradict himself like Wesley. Take, for instance, the examples given by Mr. Hill respecting *imputed righteousness*.

FOR THE DOCTRINE.

Why would you think it a strange thing that the righteousness of Christ should be imputed?

AGAINST IT.

For Christ's sake, do not dispute for the particular phrase, the imputed righteousness of

Nothing can justify expressions such as these; and when we consider all Wesley's contradictions, the enthusiasm which he sanctioned and recorded, his recourse to sortilege, his absurd doctrines about the resurrection of the brute creation, the nonsense he gravely wrote about matrimony, tea, and snuff, and his sending forth the minutes of 1770, and then declaring they did not mean what their phraseology obviously conveyed, we cannot much wonder that Mr. Hill should have allowed the

—*Mr. Wesley's Christian*. Lib. vol. ix. p. 231.

Christ bestoweth his righteousness on us by imputation.—*Christ*. Lib. vol. xiv. p. 281.

Come then, impute, impart,
To me thy righteousness.

Again,
Let faith and love combine
To guard thy valiant breast;
The plate be righteousness divine,
Imputed and imprest.—*Mr. J. Wesley's Hymns*.

The righteousness that saveth us is wrought already by God.—*Mr. Wesley's Christ*. Lib.

We are only to believe and accept this righteousness which is offered us. When that is done, it is God's part to frame us and fashion us for a holy life.—*Ibid*.

Christ's obedience in fulfilling the law, is imputed to all that believe unto righteousness, as if themselves had fulfilled it.—*Christ*. Lib. vol. xiv. p. 221.

Christ.—*Mr. Wesley's Letter to Mr. Harvey*.

The use of that term (viz. the imputation of righteousness) is not scriptural; it is not necessary; it has done immense hurt.—*Ibid*.

To say, the righteousness which justifies is already wrought out, is a crude, unscriptural expression.—*Ibid*.

The nice metaphysical doctrine of imputed righteousness, leads not to repentance, but to licentiousness, and makes men satisfied without any holiness at all.—*Ibid*.

It is neither a safe nor scriptural way of speaking, to say, the obedience of our surety is accepted instead of our own.—*Ibid*.

following lines to be printed at the end of his first pamphlet on the subject, although he may be far from desiring to vindicate the spirit shewn by the opponents of the Wesleys. The verses are meant as a travestie of the Bristol declaration.

Whereas the religion and fate of three nations,
Depend on the importance of our conversations ;
Whereas some objections are thrown in our way,
And words have been construed to mean what they say ;
Be it known, from henceforth, to each friend and each brother,
Whene'er we say one thing, we mean quite another.

Whoever reads the Minutes with attention, will acknowledge that their opponents did not misconstrue the plain meaning of the words used ; and therefore it ceases to be a matter of surprise that they who lamented the wavering opinions of Wesley, should not have been satisfied with the Bristol declaration. " I would," said Mr. Richard Hill, quoting from Bishop Hall, " I knew where to find you ; then I could take a direct aim. Whereas now I must rove and conjecture. To-day you are in the tents of the Romanists ; to-morrow in ours ; next day between both, against both. Our adversaries think you ours, we theirs ; your conscience finds you with both and neither. I flatter you not ; this of yours is the worst of all tempers. *Will you be a Church alone ?* Alas ! how full are you of contradictions to yourself ! How full of contrary purposes ! How oft do you chide with yourself ! How oft do you fight with yourself !" Page after page Mr. Hill produced of palpable contradictions in the writings of J. Wesley. Not only did he contradict himself as respected his doctrinal theories, but most singularly so in the articles of Marriage and the Sacrament of Baptism. At one time he ex-

claimed against matrimony; then he married a woman of fortune, and led an uncomfortable life with her. He wrote against "dipping" in baptism as not scriptural, and yet Toplady reminded him that once when he baptized a lady, he dipped her so heartily, and held her so long under water in a bathing tub, that her friends screamed out, thinking she had been drowned; and it was with much difficulty she recovered the operation. Charity can only attribute these discrepancies in so zealous a man to the cause indicated by Mr. Walker, of Truro, "a warm heart with a weak head."¹

But the most extraordinary part of the affair of the Minutes of 1770, was that after the adjustment at Bristol, in 1771, Mr. Fletcher should have attacked Mr. Shirley with extreme severity. This Mr. Hill asserted he did under the sanction of J. Wesley, "immediately after he had given Mr. Shirley the embrace of love and forbearance." The titles given to Mr. Fletcher's defences of his friend, "Checks to Antinomianism," sufficiently indicate the motives which induced him to write them; but if Mr. Wesley "revised, corrected, and gave his own *imprimatur*" to them all before they were printed, as Mr. Hill declared he did, he was assuredly the aggressor, although he claimed not to be considered as a party in the controversy. He was the author of the Minutes and the abettor of the "Checks" from Madeley; hence Mr. Hill inquired, when he complained of the attacks made upon him, whether he was not in the same case as the trumpeter, who pleaded when taken prisoner that he had not given a single blow in the battle, and to whom his captors replied, "Oh! but by your trumpet you set us altogether by the ears."

¹ See my Life of Walker, of Truro; second edition.

Mr. Hill considered it to be his duty to reply to the writings of Mr. Fletcher ; but he combated the opinions of his friend and adviser in his opening day of religious knowledge, with unspeakable reluctance. It is not my intention to bring forward in this history, those portions of the controversy between the Wesleyans and the opposite party which ought to be consigned to perpetual oblivion ; but I mean to vindicate the subject of my memoir from the unjust accusations of rancour and bitterness which have been heaped upon him by adversaries, who, I suspect, never examined his writings, and certainly did not understand his spirit. His productions manifest equal temper and research. “ God alone,” he wrote to Mr. Fletcher, “ knows the sorrow of heart with which I address you ; and how much the fear of casting stumbling blocks before some who are really sincere, and the apprehensions of giving malicious joy to others, who desire no greater satisfaction than to see the children of the Prince of Peace divided among themselves, had well nigh prevailed upon me to pour out my soul in silence, instead of publicly taking up the pen against you. But when I perceived the solicitude with which Mr. Wesley’s preachers recommended your letters to Mr. Shirley in their respective congregations, and above all, how many of God’s people had been perplexed and distressed by reading them ; I say, when I perceived this to be the case, and had prayed to the Giver of all wisdom for direction, I could not but esteem it my indispensable duty to send out a few observations on your book, especially as no other person that I know of, had made any reply to the doctrinal part of it from the time of its publication.” In this spirit, notwithstanding all that has been asserted to the contrary, did Mr. Hill put on his armour ; and the way

in which he concluded his part of the contest will shew that it pervaded his mind to the end. Unquestionably in the contest itself, many things escaped him which he afterwards regretted and frankly acknowledged to be wrong ; which was the truest proof that he could have given of his real design, and of the Christian integrity of his heart. His brother Rowland also, as well as Toplady and Beridge, were not justifiable in many expressions they hastily gave way to, nor in some of the names of their various productions, such as “ An Old Fox Tarred and Feathered ” — “ The Serpent and the Fox ” — “ Pope John,” &c. ; yet Mr. Richard Hill’s “ Farago Double-Distilled,” though a title scarcely defensible in so serious a discussion, had some force in it ; for never was there such a medley of conflicting statements as its pages exposed. The worst heat of the fray was between Wesley and Toplady. They were both wrong. Two specimens of their mode of proceeding will suffice, as proofs of my assertion, and warnings to contending Christians. Wesley thus analysed an old Latin treatise on predestination revised and published by Toplady.

“ The sum of all this is :—One in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected ; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will ; the reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. Reader ! believe this or be damned. Witness my hand. A. T.”

Toplady was justly indignant at such a conclusion as this, the furthest possible from his notions, and accused Wesley as a *forgery*, and told him he ought to be transported. Wesley made no reply, but set on Thomas Olivers, the Welchman, to oppose his antagonist, which raised the anger of Toplady to the highest pitch, and made him call on the chief to fight his own battles, and not leave them to his low preachers. “ Let his

coblers¹ keep to their stalls ; let his tinkers mend his brazen vessels ; let his barbers confine themselves to their blocks and basons ; let his blacksmiths blow more suitable coals than those of nice controversy : every man in his own order.” He had recourse even to the most doggrel verse, and made Wesley thus speak of Olivers :—

“ I’ve Thomas Olivers, the cobbler,
 No stall in England holds a nobler,
 A wight of talents universal,
 Whereof I’ll give a brief rehcarsal :
 He wields, beyond most other men,
 His awl, his razor, and his pen.
 My beard he shaves, repairs my shoe,
 And writes my panegyric too,
 He, with one brandish of his quill,
 Can knock down Toplady and Hill ;
 With equal ease, whenc’er there’s need,
 Can darn my stockings and my creed ;
 Can drive a nail, or ply the needle,
 Hem handkerchief, and scrape the fiddle ;
 Chop logic as an ass chews thistle,
 More skilfully than you can whistle ;
 And then when he philosophises,
 No son of Crispin half so wise is.
 Of all my ragged regiment,
 This cobbler gives me most content ;
 *My forgeries’ and faith’s defender,
 My barber, champion, and shoe-mender.”

These are mournful examples of this singular contest between men whom every one allows to have been zealous and efficient revivalists, in days of extreme darkness and irreligion. The stain rests on the memory of each ;

¹ Olivers was a shoemaker, and having only half-learned his business, he was called “ The Cobbler.” It is pleasant, however, to remember, that Toplady had a subsequent interview with him, and that they exchanged expressions of good will.

and when we look upon it in sorrow and pity, we should in these times of divided opinion, pray earnestly for that purifying love which can alone preserve us from an equal blot upon our Christian character and conduct.

I shall pursue the traces of this blameable feeling no further; and rejoice in vindication of Mr. Richard Hill, to have it in my power to exhibit him as desiring to retire from the contest in a humble and forgiving manner. With regard to any harsh words which he had used respecting Wesley, he wrote to Mr. Fletcher, "I desire to crave forgiveness for all such, and to take shame to myself for whatsoever has appeared to savour too strongly of my own spirit; for, however I may disapprove of Mr. Wesley's doctrines, I still find it very hard to give up the favourable opinion I was wont to entertain of him." Soon after, feeling that perpetual strife was both injurious to his own mind and to the cause of religion, he made every effort to suppress the sale of his various polemical pamphlets. Upon this Wesley wrote him "a short and civil letter, in which he avowed his intention to cease from controversial authorship," and expressed a hope "that all would be peace for the time to come, and that they should think and let think, bear and forbear with one another." Mr. Hill says, "this letter I took kindly of Mr. Wesley, and therefore, as I went soon afterwards to London, I embraced the opportunity of going one evening in company with the Rev. Mr. Pentycross, to West-street Chapel; and after service Mr. Pentycross introduced me to Mr. Wesley, when I thanked him for his letter, assured him of my intention to drop the controversy, and added, that I hoped there would be no more said upon the subject from any quarter. Mr. Wesley took me by the hand, assured me of his loving, pacific disposition, and we parted very good friends."

Such a meeting was creditable to both these zealous men, and it is much to be deplored that anything afterwards happened to rekindle their differences. There were, even then, not wanting mischievous people, whose element seems the storm in all times, who misrepresented this interview, and magnified Mr. Hill's anxiety for peace into a recantation of his principles, and an acknowledgment of altered views respecting the obnoxious Minutes he had so earnestly impugned. This induced Mr. Hill to allow his pamphlets to remain still on sale; namely, the one containing the Paris Conversation in a Convent; also his five letters to Mr. Fletcher; his Review of Mr. Wesley's Doctrines; his *Logica Wesleyensis*, or *The Farrago Double-Distilled*; and *The Finishing Stroke*. The real spirit in which he proposed to withdraw from the controversy, will appear in three letters he wrote to Mr. Fletcher, before this last determination, in consequence of the false rumours respecting the recantation of his opinions.

To the Rev. Mr. Fletcher.

Hawkstone, July 31, 1773.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I am credibly informed that you wish to have done with controversy, and that you are resolved to publish nothing more on the subject of the late disputes. Upon the strength of this information, as well as to maintain my own desire of promoting peace, I shall write to my bookseller in London, to sell no more of any of my pamphlets which relate to the minutes; and for whatever may have savored too much of my own spirit, either in my answers to you, or to Mr. Wesley, I sincerely crave the forgiveness of you both, and should

be most heartily glad if no person whatever, were to add another word to what has been already said on either side. And permit me to hint, that if some restraint could be laid upon several of Mr. Wesley's preachers, particularly upon one Perronet (of whose superlatively abusive and insolent little piece, I believe, Mr. Charles Wesley testified his abhorrence from the pulpit,) I think, under God, it might be a salutary means of preventing the poison of vain janglings from spreading any further. But though it is the desire of my soul, to live in harmony, love, and friendship with you, dear sir, yet if God has ever shown me anything of my own heart, or of the truths of his word, I must and still do think that your principles are exceedingly erroneous; and of this I ever cherish a secret hope that God will convince you, in the course of his dealings with your soul.

Wishing you an abundance of grace, mercy, and peace, I beg leave to subscribe myself,

Rev. and dear sir,

Your sincere friend in the Gospel of Immanuel,

R. HILL.

P. S. I wish, dear, sir, you would make Mr. Wesley acquainted with the contents of this letter, and if I stop the sale of my books, I hope that of the four "Checks" will be stopped also.

To the Rev. Mr. Fletcher.

August, 1773.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Attendance at the assizes, and multiplicity of business in my office as a justice of the peace, have prevented my returning a more speedy answer to your let-

ter, in which I find you complain of my having treated you with severity ; this obliges me to request you to call to mind the four " Checks," and then to say what right the author of them has to complain of severity. Read over the sneering mock proclamation given by the four secretaries of state of the predestinarian department ; read the charges brought against our celebrated pulpits ; and if you can still justify what you have advanced, you may then with better reason accuse me of severity. It now pains me to bring these things to your remembrance, as I was determined when I wrote last, to avoid every shadow of any accusation against you for what had passed, and I think you must acknowledge that my letter was friendly : but your introduction of the subject obliges me to say what I have. I wish I had any grounds to recal what I have said concerning your having laid very great misrepresentations before the public, in your quotations from Mr. Wesley's minutes, and in the harmony you would make your readers believe there is between the Reformers and Puritans, and Mr. Wesley and yourself ; for it is most sure that your principles and theirs are as wide as east from west.

How far it may be fair to alter the title of your sermon from what it stands in the manuscript, must be left to yourself : however, I am sure, I have no objection to it as you propose to print it. As to your explanatory notes and additions in brackets, you know, sir, that by these you may easily make the sermon itself speak what language you see proper. Clarke and Priestly by explanatory notes and additions in brackets, can explain away the divinity of Christ ; Socinus, his atonement, &c. ; Taylor the corruption of human nature. As you intend to introduce my worthless name into your next publication, I must beg to decline the

obliging offer you make of my perusing your MSS.,
and am, Rev. and dear sir,

Your sincere friend for Christ's sake.

RICHARD HILL.

To the Rev. Mr. Fletcher.

Hawkstone, Dec. 23, 1773.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

I take the liberty of requesting you to distribute among the poor of Madeley, the inclosed two guineas, in such way and manner as you shall judge fit and proper.

I sent your last letter to my brother Rowland, who is now at Tottenham Court chapel, and suppose he received it. However, I wave saying any thing of the subject of it, as it is my design to have totally done with the controversy, which I am firmly persuaded has not done me any good, (excuse me if I say I wish you to examine closely whether it has done you any) and therefore for my own part I desire to be humbled before God, as well as to ask your forgiveness and Mr. Wesley's, (to whom I purpose making a visit of peace and love when I go to London) for every thing that has savored of wrong or of my own spirit, in what I have written relative to his minutes; and though I believe your sentiments to be erroneous, yet I esteem and honor you for all you have said against sin; and for the stand you have made for practical religion in this Laodicean, Antinomian age; and truly concerned should I be, if any expressions have dropped from my pen, which might make the readers think lightly of sin, under the notion of honoring the Saviour from sin. But as God can bear me witness that I had no intentions of this sort,

so I am certain that whosoever makes Christ all his salvation, can never at the same time make him a minister of sin ; and I trust the hour will come, when under a deep sense of your own sinfulness and nothingness, you will be glad to lay hold of some of those comfortable gospel truths, which now you even look upon as dangerous poison.

In consequence of my former letter to you, I wrote to my bookseller in London, and told Mr. Eddowes in Shrewsbury, to stop the sale of all my publications, concerning the controversy between us, and (unless God shews me that it is matter of duty so to do) I shall not revoke this order ; it being my earnest desire for the time to come, if it be possible, to live peaceably with all men ; and though I cannot approve some of Mr. Wesley's doctrines, because I believe them to be contrary to Scripture, and am sure they are contrary to my own experience, yet as I am persuaded that many who are the excellent of the earth are in his connection, I wish to confirm my love towards them on account of the grace that is in them ; and whilst I reject their errors, still to esteem their persons, nor ever to say or do any thing that may hurt that common cause for which we ought all to be contending, or which may grieve the weakest or meanest of Christ's people.

These, dear sir, are my present sentiments and intentions, and you have my free permission to declare them upon the house-top. An afflictive breach which God has lately been pleased to make in our family, by depriving me of a most tender and affectionate mother, calls upon me to beg your prayers, that the sudden stroke may be sanctified to me and to us all, and loudly bids me remember that I am but a stranger and pilgrim here below. May the Lord give me a pilgrim's spirit !

and may he give us both a right judgment in all things.
Permit me to subscribe myself,

Rev. and dear sir,

Your sincere friend,

And servant in Christ,

RICHARD HILL.

It is impossible to read these letters of Mr. Hill to his affectionate adviser in days of early conviction, without acquitting him of any thing like that bitterness of which he has been so hastily accused by writers of various kinds. Authors, however, often find it easier to let prejudices guide a ready pen, than to labour in that research which is due to the characters they undertake to describe. In full recollection of the gentle manner in which Mr. Fletcher had poured the oil of Christian consolation into a wounded spirit during the agony of deep mental suffering, Mr. Hill could never have uttered a syllable in contradiction of his views without a pang ; but when his former counsellor and friend would continue the controversy, he conceived that he had no alternative than to let the sale of his publications continue, though he declined either reading or writing anything more on the subjects at issue. He was right ; for both parties had grossly misrepresented each other, drawing inferences from their respective tenets of the most monstrous kind, and making *creeds*¹ out of one another's

¹ We have already seen what Wesley put forth in Toplady's name ; but it was quite of a piece with a paper a clergyman sent to Mr. Hill, called " A Creed for Arminians and Perfectionists," the *eleventh* Article of which is as follows : " Though I have solemnly subscribed to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and have affirmed that I believe them from my heart, yet I think our Reformers were profoundly ignorant of true Christianity, when they

sentiments, which were ill suited indeed to the dignity of the truth they severally professed to defend. When Mr. Shirley met his opponents at Bristol, asperity was quickly softened down ; and if such reunions had been repeated when difficulties arose, the signs of the unhal-
lowed conflict would not have remained to shock those who trace the paths of these eminent revivalists.¹

No age has ever produced a minister of truer self-denial, or nobler zeal than Fletcher of Madeley. Love beamed in his countenance and graced every movement of his daily life. The constant aspiration of his heart was, that he might be made more and more holy after the image of his Redeemer, whence the very mention of

declared in the Ninth Article that ‘ the infection of nature doth remain in them which are regenerate,’ and in the Fifteenth, that ‘ All we, the rest (Christ only excepted) although baptized and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things ; and *if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*’ This I totally deny, because it cuts up, root and branch, my favorite doctrine of *Perfection* ; and therefore let Peter, Paul, James or John, say what they will : and let reformers and martyrs join their syren song, their eyes were at best but half opened, for want of a little *Foundry* eye-salve ; therefore I cannot look upon them as adult believers and fathers in Christ

| | | |
|---------------|---|------------------|
| J. F. | } | J. Fletcher, |
| J. W. meaning | | J. Wesley, |
| W. S. | | Walter Shirley." |

Nothing could be more unfair than this. Fletcher, however, did pretty nearly the same thing, for he signed his " Gospel Proclamation," a production altogether unworthy of him—" Given at *Geneva*, and signed by four of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state for the predestinarian department :

John Calvin, Dr. Crisp,
The Author of P. O. Rowland Hill."

¹ Mr. Berridge, who was at one time engaged in this controversy, saw the necessity of declining it, and determined not to reply to certain strictures on his opinions from the pen of Mr. Fletcher.

Antinomianism thrilled through his frame ; and when he conceived that the monster was nourished by the doctrines of the Calvinists, he resolved to assail him at the expense of his own ease and every other consideration. His susceptible feelings were quickened by the heat of a vivid imagination, which nothing could have subdued but calm conversation on the topics which haunted it, with those who enjoyed in common with himself the essentials of vital Christianity, and were equally disgusted with the very Antinomianism¹ he conceived that they cherished. Accordingly he engaged in a paper war,—of all wars the surest to call forth the latent evils of the mind. Pamphleteering in controversy never yet failed to exhibit opponents in wrong colours ; and few persons have engaged in it, without deep injury to the best qualities of their hearts and understandings. Fletcher lost in it his meekness and his candour, and ended with being declared to be no authority,² by the very section on whose side he fought, though he refused even a truce in their behalf. That he was sincere, no man acquainted with his character can for an instant presume to doubt ; but sincerity has often been disfigured by precipitate judgment or morbid imagination,

¹ Mr. Hill, than whom a greater enemy to that iniquitous doctrine never lived, observed with reference to the reports which were circulated respecting his views : “ I esteem it a happiness that my little piece entitled, “ A present for your neighbour,” was published at the very time when the cry of Antinomianism rang loudest against all those who chose rather to abide by the determinations of our Lord and his Apostles, than by those of Mr. Wesley and his associates ; as I hope it carries with it a standing confutation of the base slanders with which I, and all who believe the same truths, have been loaded from a certain quarter.” He means by Mr. Fletcher.

² The Wesleysans do not consider the opinions of Fletcher as *standards*.

especially when battling with phantoms. In the legitimate labours of his pastoral calling, he was a meek and peaceful shepherd, and wore himself out in his lovely zeal for souls ; and when his sunken eye and emaciated frame proclaimed from his dying bed that he was on the verge of the grave, his blessing to his people as they took their last weeping glance of their departing minister and friend, told plainly how his sufferings had ripened him for heaven. There are still left one or two in his parish at Madeley who remember Fletcher, and they consider it the greatest privilege of their lives ever to have even seen him ; so dear is his memory amidst the scenes in which he moved. I shall never forget how one man's eye brightened who told me, when I visited the place, that he had *seen* him when a boy, nor how anxious he was to take me to the house of an old woman who *knew* him. Every relic of this saintly minister is venerated at Madeley : his arm-chair remains in the vicarage study ; his pulpit stands in an arbour in the garden, and the Parish Register records that " his labours were unparalleled, and his loss irreparable." Cold indeed must be the heart that could remain unmoved upon the field of Fletcher's pastoral exertions, even though the nunderstanding failed to acquiesce in all his proceedings ; for never could any bearer of the heavenly message more justly address his flock in the words of the great Apostle, " We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." His mind must have been strongly excited before he was induced to enter upon the field of controversy ; nor indeed would any less motive than the notion that he was combating the most awful of all Antichrists, the spirit of Antinomianism, ever have caused one whose nature was so gentle, to assume the attitude of a dis-

putant. More than half a century has elapsed since he went to rest, uttering praises and blessings with his dying lips; and were his opponents now alive, they would all, with one heart and one voice, concur in this tribute to the memory of one of the brightest characters that ever shed its lustre on the pathway of the Christian pilgrimage.

CHAPTER IX.

LETTERS OF MR. RICHARD HILL TO A SCEPTICAL MAN OF FASHION.

LETTERS TO A MAN OF FASHION.

I trust I have sufficiently vindicated the memory of Mr. Richard Hill, from the aspersions cast upon it by those who knew nothing of the real motives which induced him to enter into the Wesleyan controversy, or of his anxiety for peace. He possessed a most tender conscience, and was a cordial honest friend. Whatever view may be taken of the manner in which he expressed himself in some of his pamphlets, and of peculiarities belonging as much to the age as to the man, he will be found to have been, in the general tenor of his life, an admirable example of the Christian gentleman, in days when such a character was little appreciated. In order to exhibit him as he really was in this delightful point of view, I mean to dedicate the present chapter to some specimens of his private correspondence, with one who moved in the same circle of society with himself. His letters are full of fidelity and courtesy ; and they who do not acquiesce in all his notions of Christian doctrine, will find that no person more strenuously inferred from his tenets the necessity of holy practice. The first letter

of this series was written when he was deeply afflicted by the death of his friend Mr. Powys,¹ with whom he had long associated in terms of great intimacy, and who was his fellow traveller when he visited Paris in 1771.

September 17th, 1774.

DEAR SIR,

I fully intended myself the pleasure of waiting upon you at — on Thursday next, but that awful providence which has so lately deprived me of the dear and valuable friend who was to have come with me, must plead my excuse for not fulfilling my engagement

¹ In a memorandum book of Mr. Richard Hill is the following tribute to the memory of this excellent man, which I believe was sent by him for insertion in the Shrewsbury Chronicle:—

“Character of my most beloved, intimate, and truly valuable friend, Thomas Powys, Esq., who went to his everlasting rest on the fourteenth day of September, 1774.

“On Wednesday morning last, between five and six o’clock, died suddenly of a paralytic stroke, at his seat at Hardwick, in this county, Thomas Powys, Esq., &c. To form a proper eulogium for so amiable a character, would be a task too arduous for the editor of this paper to attempt. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that his lady has great reason to lament the loss of a most affectionate husband, and all his domestics that of a most tender and indulgent master; while the poor, to whom he was ever accessible, will have abundant cause to mourn that their sympathetic and generous benefactor is no more. In friendship he was steady, sanguine, and invariably sincere; and in the cause of God zealous, yet self-diffident and disinterested. As to his religious principles, he invariably adhered to the great doctrines of the Reformation, and his private deportment did honour to the sentiments he espoused. In short, he was possessed of all those amiable endowments which could make his character respectable to the public, and will ever embalm his memory to the general circle of his friends.” This appeared in the Shrewsbury Chronicle on the day of the date of the first of these letters.

at this time. However, I beg leave to assure you that I shall be very glad to see you at Hawkstone whenever it may be agreeable to you. If you purpose being at Salop during the Sessions, which are the fourth and fifth of next month, perhaps it may suit your convenience to return with me from thence.

I own to you, my dear Sir, that I now write in much affliction, but the firm persuasion I have of my worthy friend's happiness, and the submission I owe to that unerring wisdom which has seen fit to take him from among us, are my great supports under the heavy loss which I have sustained; and not only I, but all his friends and family, more particularly the poor and the distressed, to whose cries he never shut his ear, nor closed his hand; yet so secret was he in his charities, where the case would admit, that he strictly adhered to those words of our Saviour, "Let not thy right hand know what thy left hand doeth."

Pardon me for troubling you upon a subject in which, from your little acquaintance with Mr. Powys, you cannot be much interested; but my mind is at present full of it, and you know that upon far less important occasions, what is uppermost in the heart will flow out through the lips or pen. I should be sorry, however, that even my affection for a deceased friend should make me forget the politeness which is due to a surviving one, if I may have the honour of calling Mr. — by that name; but though the subject, as it particularly relates to Mr. Powys, must chiefly affect those who had the pleasure of an intimacy with so good a man, yet the event itself, and the very sudden manner in which it pleased God to take him out of the world, are certainly loud calls to us all to weigh well the vanity of time with the importance of eternity; for though serious things

are treated with indifference by the most, and even with contempt and ridicule by too many, yet there is a period not far distant from any of us, in which it will be found that true religion is our highest wisdom, and the neglect of it the most extravagant folly. In the meanwhile, if Christianity could not afford me a solid support under all the trials, changes, and troubles of life; if it could not, even here, give me a happiness superior to every thing else which imprudently assumes that commonly delusive name, I would reject it as a cunningly-devised fable, and treat its author as a base impostor. But if even a heathen could say,

*Sic, quia perpetuus nulli datur usus, aut hæres
Hæredem alterius, velut unda supervenit undam,
Quid vici prosunt, aut horrea? quidve Calabris
Saltibus adjecti Lucani, si metit Orcus
Grandia cum parvis, non exorabilis auro?*

If even an unenlightened heathen could thus reason upon the vanity of all temporal enjoyments, and pour contempt upon all human felicity; surely, unless it can be proved that we are more interested in the Epistles of Horace than those of St. Paul (and I confess it is much more fashionable to quote the former than the latter) a Christian may be allowed to adopt the language of that inspired penman, and to say, "Yea, doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." And again, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Or in the words of the pious and learned Dr. Watts,

*When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count my loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.*

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
 Save in the death of Christ my God,
 All the vain things which charm me most
 I sacrifice them to his blood.

This was the determination of the great Apostle of the Gentiles; and if I knew of any better wish than that you might copy after him in the wisdom of his choice, give me leave to assure you that you should not want such a wish from,

Dear Sir,

Your sincere friend,

And most humble servant,

R. H.

P.S. I write this from Hardwick, where my most dear friend now lies dead, and is to be buried the very day we were to have gone together to ——; but instead of accompanying him thither, I am to follow his corpse to the grave, if I am able.

The next letter is highly characteristic; but seldom has a more earnest, faithful, unanswerable appeal been made on topics of the highest moment, by one gentleman to another. Would that all moving in the higher circles of society, who profess the name of Christ, were equally ready with Mr. Hill to speak *out* upon the subject of religion, and to warn their friends of the dangers arising from a love of the world.

Hawkstone, Oct. 7th, 1774.

MY DEAR SIR,

You desire me to write to you; you repeat the request; and I gladly, very gladly, comply with it. What can be Mr. ——'s reason for asking a letter from

my *infamous* pen? Perhaps it may be his great politeness, and he thought I expected it, and he would even punish himself to pay me a compliment. But indeed it was much more than I expected, and however highly I may think of dear Mr. ——'s politeness, it certainly would not have been the least impeached, if he had only maintained a distant civility with the *scandalous* R. H. without desiring his correspondence.

I have searched for other motives for your request, but can find none, and am therefore come to the conclusion that you asked me to write to you because you really wished to hear from me. But you know by sad experience what a *Seccatore* I am. You know to what an uncouth, unfashionable subject I am apt to confine my letters. Well! this is a greater proof yet, not only of your amazing patience and uncommon candour, but that you have some relish for the subject itself, uncouth and unfashionable as it may be.

I cannot too early thank you for your most kind and friendly visit at Hawkstone, than which, few (I must give you a *plumper* and say none) have ever been more welcome to me. And as you are not at present *en famille* in your own house, and have now found the way hither, I hope whenever you have a few days to spare, you will so far lay aside ceremony as to make us all happy in your company, and be assured I shall with pleasure wait upon you at —— whenever it may be convenient to you, but I know how much you have been taken up of late, and how many engagements you have upon your hands before you visit the *Capitol* (to use a favourite word of Lord Chesterfield), and therefore I had rather wait your summons than fix my own time for paying you a visit, as in this, as in everything else, I wish you to treat me with the freedom of a sincere friend; so that

if you had rather I did not come to you till your return from London, you will oblige me much more by telling me so, than by suffering me to come *pour vous gener*.

When I think of the freedom wherewith I have treated you, and the many *looses* I have made to you, I am almost as much astonished at my own want of reserve, (I mean particularly in some things I told you relative to myself) as I am at your kindness in having borne with me. But believe me, my dear Mr. —, this is not my usual way of proceeding, as there are many excellent persons with whom I have been acquainted for several years, to whom, notwithstanding, I never thought of opening my heart in the manner I have done to you ; if, therefore, my conduct in this respect has given you a proof of my weakness, I hope you will pity my folly, as well as pardon my impertinence ; and I am sure you will never so far betray the confidence I have reposed in you, as to make anything I have said the subject of conversation to others.

You know my sentiments about your seat in Parliament ; the intended petition against you, &c. In all these matters I heartily wish you success : but these are at best mere *bagatelles*, and if they answer according to your desire, the happiness which results from them can neither be great nor long lived. But it is a reflection of the highest concern that you are a creature ruined by sin ; that sin has separated you from God ; that it has brought guilt upon your soul ; and that naturally you are enslaved by the love of it. This is truly your case, and I would hope you are not without some knowledge of it, though I trust this knowledge will go much deeper, till sin really becomes your heaviest burden ; otherwise you cannot be in the number of those whom Christ calls, nor indeed can you have any relish for that gra-

cious invitation of his, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." No, "the whole need not a physician, but those that are sick." Till, therefore, you are made sick of sin you will never prize the gospel remedy. Are you tempted to continue in sin? Consider well this simple question—what will sin profit you in a dying hour? (an hour which must soon come) and remember that it is an undoubted truth that you must either resolve to part with sin, or part with heaven. Your conscience is now on my side, and yet in spite of this faithful monitor, I know you will often be ready to say, *deteriora sequor*, &c.

Try if you can answer this reasoning: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Put sin and the world into one scale, and put your soul into the other, and ask your own heart which you would wish should have preponderated when death looks you in the face? It is an Apostle's injunction, "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God;" but my dear friend how little have you asked yourself in any action throughout life, "Will this or that be for the glory of God?" Again, the same Apostle says, "Pray without ceasing," which at least means that the heart should be always kept in a suitable disposition for prayer; but how many days, weeks, months, years, have you passed without one importunate petition to the throne of grace, or once crying out with the Psalmist, "Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me!" Once more, the word of inspiration declares that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God," and that, "if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him;" but has not my dear —— continually lived under the influence of this love of the world? Has

he not been wholly governed by worldly maxims, worldly hopes, and worldly fears, worldly delights, friendships, and attachments? In short, have not *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*, which three particulars collectively taken, are by St. John emphatically stiled *the world*—have not these hitherto had a most bewitching ascendancy over you, so that you neither have had the will nor the power to shake off their bondage, but have thought that bondage perfect freedom? And if now you are making any struggles for liberty, as I hope and think you are, you will soon be convinced how strong a tie the world has upon your heart, and that the fear of being thought singularly religious, is perhaps one of the strongest links of that galling chain with which we are all naturally bound.

My dear sir, as you have been pleased to honor me with your friendship (and how great a value I put upon it, I will not attempt to say), I think I should act very unworthy of it, were I not faithful to you on a subject in which your *everlasting all* (if I may use the expression) centres. I am sure the world cannot make you happy; you know, you feel it cannot, and in your coolest, calmest moments you find an aching void in your heart and conscience, which no earthly enjoyments can satisfy. But if you are made a partaker of *real, genuine* Christianity, (for many adopt the shadow for the substance, and the form for the power of it) you will then find that it is a scheme highly worthy of God, exactly suited to relieve your wants as a fallen, guilty creature, and to administer to you that solid happiness and that perfect peace, which Jesus himself bequeathed as his dying legacy to his disciples—"My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

Beware of harbouring the thought that it is matter of

indifference whether you attend to these things or not ; or of looking upon them as a *particular way of thinking*, which a man may or may not adopt, and yet all may be well with him. Religion is a personal concern, and it behoves you above all things in the world, to know how you as a creature ruined by sin, may nevertheless meet death with confidence, and see that king of terrors disarmed of his sting and turned into a messenger of peace.

This, Christianity and nothing else can shew you, and even here can make you happy in the anticipation of that most awful period, when you must close your eyes to time and open them in eternity. My dear, dear friend, neglect not these things ; you will find them the words of truth and soberness ; and indeed they are also the result of my own inward experience.

I have written you a very long letter, and during the time you have been reading it, though I could not “ *hold you by the button*,” I trust I have held you by the heart. The subject, you must allow, is more interesting than any transactions which were ever carried on between the Phenicians and Corsicans ; and yet I am persuaded you are under no apprehensions that our friend the Colonel, though in his 76th year, will ever *bore* you upon it. But however interesting it may be, yet I think if you were to produce my epistle after dinner to-morrow, at ——,¹ it would cause some very alarming suspicions about you, and (*nemine contradicente*) would be voted by the jovial company to the flames ; for the utmost stretch of my charity will hardly allow me to suppose that there is one member of the fraternity, who is “ *striving to enter in at the strait gate*,” or “ *working out his salvation with fear and trembling*.” Adieu ! my dear sir. * * * * *

¹ A club of gentlemen.

Believe me, without the least grain of the old Earl's dissimulation,

Your most affectionate friend, &c.

R. H.

Powerful as the expression of Mr. Hill's sentiments is here, it is even more so in the next appeal to his correspondent on the most solemn of all subjects. His mode of arguing will be found to be a perfect contradiction to those accusations of a leaning to Antinomianism, with which he had but a short time before been so unfairly assailed. When will Christians learn forbearance, and cease to misrepresent each other ?

Hawkstone, Nov. 7th, 1774.

My dear —,

I was not without hopes of finding you in Shrewsbury on Saturday last, to which place I went to attend St. Alkmond's Church next day. A strange errand it might be thought ; and many would say *le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle* ; but I believe several went full as far to attend Oswestry hunt, therefore *chacun a son goût*. Not having the pleasure of meeting you at Salop, my thanks for your most friendly letter must be committed to paper, instead of being delivered *vivâ voce*.

I am concerned for the occasion which calls you to London ; not only because I am rather doubtful of your success, but because your mind must necessarily be affected and agitated by the present situation of your affairs. Whilst this is the case, that which is of very small importance in itself comparatively considered, may, I fear, thrust out those things which are of much greater moment. For instance, it will be of no manner of con-

sequence to you fifty or sixty years hence, whether you lose your election or not; but it will be of the highest consequence to you millions and millions of years to come, whether your soul be lost or saved. The mind of man is a busy, active principle; it must fix upon something; by nature it has a wrong bias, and therefore never fixes upon God, but upon earthly objects; and that which most affects it, or is nearest to it for the time, though ever so inconsiderable in itself, always appears to be the thing of the greatest importance, and upon this the mind continues to act till something new comes in, and makes the former concern give way, and with it vanishes all its seeming importance. Thus the minds of the generality of men are perpetually taken up, and are perpetually shifting from one *important* nothing to another, till that really important hour overtakes them, which made one great man cry out upon his death-bed, *heu! vitam operosé perdidi nihil agendo*; and another, *the battle is fought, but the victory is lost for ever!* Christianity alone accounts for this amazing infatuation, by representing man as a fallen creature, whose heart is alienated from God, and is enmity against him, (a representation by-the-bye so galling to our pride, that if the bible were the device of men, the authors of it took the most effectual methods to have it rejected) whilst awful experience confirms on every side the melancholy truth.

Consider, my dear friend, what that space of time is which you are now filling up between two eternities—for there must have been an eternity before your existence as well as there will be after it—give it the utmost stretch, ninety or a hundred years, though perhaps it may not be so many hours, yet when compared with those unfathomable depths which are all comprised in

that one word ETERNITY,—a word in which thought itself is speedily swallowed up—what is it! Not so much as a single atom of dust when compared with the whole globe! Nevertheless, how many thousands of mistaken mortals are there, who suppose (at least if one may judge by their practice) that they are placed here to consume their transitory moments in a continual forgetfulness of God. Thus one when he comes on the verge of the grave, has the *solid* comfort of reflecting that he dies worth so many thousand pounds; another, that he has perhaps attended so many feasts, hunts, &c., and has drunk more constitutional toasts than any other man in the county; a third, that he has had * * * *
 * * * * *; a fourth, that he is just going to lie in state, and to have a coronet upon his coffin! But the real Christian is awakened out of the delusive dream; he knows that disappointment is written upon every thing which the world calls happiness; he knows that there is an inheritance reserved for him beyond the confines of the earth, and he often tries his title to that inheritance by reading in his own breast those marks, which the word of truth makes the distinguishing characteristics of the true disciples of Jesus. For instance, the Scripture assures him that “if any man be in Christ he is a new creature;” that “he is crucified to the world, and the world unto him;” that “he is renewed in the spirit of his mind;” that “to them who believe, Christ is precious;” that “whosoever will be Christ’s disciple must take up his cross daily, deny himself and follow him;” that “except a man be born again (or born from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God.” But are these the distinguishing marks of real Christians and true believers? Then the grand, interesting question for you and me is—are we partakers of them?

If we are, we are happy indeed ; if not, what hope can we have that we shall have peace at our latter end? Certainly none that will profit us, if the Scriptures be true, because the declarations of eternal truth are sure and invariable. Then by the plainest logical conclusion in the world, all the hope which a man who is not a *new creature in Christ Jesus*, can possibly entertain that he shall escape everlasting destruction, must be built upon the supposition that the bible *may* not be true! And what a state is it to live and be easy in, thus to reflect: "If the Scriptures be true, and if I die in the condition I am now in, eternal misery awaits me, and therefore all the comfort I can take to myself, arises from the consideration that after death I *may, perhaps*, be annihilated!" My dear candid friend, review this reasoning, and tell me whether, if the Scriptures be true, the world, the flesh, and the devil have anything to give you for which you should make a compliment of your soul to this accursed Cerberus, and for which, if the Scriptures be *not* true, you should run the risk of endless misery, or annihilation? If you have any doubts of the truth of Christianity, I can pity and sympathize with you from my heart ; but if God has given you an honest, unprejudiced, inquiring mind, and a disposition to do his will in proportion as it is discovered to you, I am sure you will not labour long under those doubts. But it will be a very bad sign of your want of sincerity, if you have any secret reserves of any particular bosom sin which you cannot pray to God to tear away, though as near and dear to you as a right hand or a right eye. Remember too, my dear —, that you cannot "serve God and mammon." A divided heart is not the sacrifice with which God is well pleased. "Be not conformed to this world," is the apostolic injunction. Light

and darkness, fire and water, are not greater contrarities in nature, than the friendship of the world and the love of God are in grace. "My son, give me thy heart," says God; but nature replies, "Anything, Lord, but my heart—I will give thee the lip and the knee, and as many outside ceremonies as thou pleasest; but my heart, my whole heart must not surrender." Thus cries nature,—but all powerful grace can soon conquer the citadel; and then, instead of pleading for lusts and indulgences, its language will be,

" Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my *all*.

Now, my dear friend, can you in any measure adopt this language, or can you receive that saying, "Except a man forsake all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple?" Again, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." To nature these things are impossible, but grace makes them nothing to me, insomuch that when all my relations and friends were in the utmost anxiety about me, and thought I was going mad and melancholy, and I know not what, the burden of my sin and the salvation of my soul so much outweighed every other consideration, that none of these things moved me at all; not but at times I found the fear of man working strongly in me, which made my dastardly heart shrink back at the sight of the cross, and caused the dread of shame to operate so powerfully, that I felt a great reluctance openly to countenance those truths and those persons whom in my judgment I secretly approved; but when I considered those words of our Lord, "Whosoever is ashamed of me, of him will I be

ashamed," I was enabled to burst through all my pusillanimous reasonings, and to say with the Apostle, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

Now, my dear ——, as you have even thanked me for my last letter, *and for the friendly, unreserved manner in which I wrote to you* (words which I have read over and over with the most cordial satisfaction), I am persuaded you will now bear with me whilst I tell you, that I believe herein will consist your grand trial, (and it will be by far the most important crisis of your whole life) whether you will part with your sins, and your worldly character, or whether you will part with heaven and your soul. One or the other of these determinations you will soon come to: may the Lord God of all grace and wisdom direct you to make the happy choice! I often pray that he may do so; for I know well that so strong is the bias of your nature towards sin, that nothing which I could say, and even no resolutions which you yourself might make, will be of the least avail without the aid of Omnipotence.

You see, my dear friend, I do not, will not, dare not flatter you. I am far from presenting you with any pleasing picture of yourself, or from treating you with "*a dish of hypocrisy garnished with graces*;" but I am sure I tell you the true state of your case, and, though I would not willingly offend you for the world, and can now hardly write to you without tears of affection, yet I had rather risk your displeasure a thousand times, than cease to act the part of a real friend to you in a matter compared with which life and property are of no consideration.

I can add no more at present. My dear, candid, un-

prejudiced friend, God bless you. Read the Scriptures ; pray for faith and grace, and remember who has said, "One thing is needful."

Yours most sincerely,

R. H.

P.S. Pray favour me with some account of your motions ; when you propose setting out for London, &c. If you go alone, I can recommend a very agreeable companion to you. Is not this a *bull* ? But whether it be one or not, who is this companion ? Why, he is one who will only put you to the expense of three shillings, and will neither eat nor drink upon the road. He is one, too, who heartily wishes you to gain your *election*. He will converse with you when you please, and be silent when you please. To be plain, he is a Bishop, but one who has happily escaped old Latimer's gap, and is indeed safely landed. His name is Beveridge.¹ He will wait patiently for you till you take him up in your post chaise at Mr. Eddowes', the bookseller.

The last letter being favourably received, Mr. Hill wrote again as follows :—

Hawkstone, Nov. 18th, 1774.

MY DEAR —,

Whatever suspicions may have arisen in my mind concerning you, I never harboured one that you could act unworthy the true friend, or the polite gentleman ; but I freely own that I was rather apprehensive that I myself had somewhat exceeded the bounds of pru-

¹ The book recommended was Bishop Beveridge's *Private Thoughts*.

dence in what I had said in my last, though I knew I had not exceeded the bounds of truth ; or at least that I had been so intent upon the *fortiter in re*, that I had paid too little regard to the *suaviter in modo*. But I perceive you can bear very plain dealing, since the sum and substance of that letter was tantamount to this—"if Christianity be right, you have hitherto been diametrically wrong"—a declaration which would most heinously offend ninety-nine out of a hundred among those, of whose spiritual state I have nevertheless a much worse opinion, than I have of that of the dear friend to whom I am now writing. If you doubt the truth of this, try the experiment the next visit you make to *Feliciania*, and you will soon find the *curl of her countenance* much more discomposed than that of ——'s wig, by the opposition he met with from Mr. ——, at Radnor ; for to give you plainly my sentiments of our good cousin, I take her to be a thorough *Mrs. Clinker*.

You are very kind to wish for my company in a post chaise to London, instead of that of Bishop Beveridge, though you would have changed much for the worse. However, if you had given me the most distant hint of this before, and if it would have afforded you the least satisfaction, or have been the smallest consolation to you under your *fusses*, I would indeed have gone with you *de tout mon cœur* ; and would have made you the offer of this myself, but I was fearful lest you should think me intruding ; and as I am now circumstanced, it will be impossible ; therefore I must think no more about it, but content myself with wishing you a good journey. However, as I suppose you mean to return again in January, I shall then be very happy to attend you ; in the meanwhile may God be with you, my dear friend ; and let me add, may he preserve you from the abomina-

tions of the place to which you are going. May your conscience be kept tender as the apple of an eye, and watchful against every approach of sin ; for I am sure there is not a worse state on this side eternal torments, than for a man to be at ease, and to think himself happy, whilst the guilt of unpardoned sin lies upon his soul, and whilst the love and power of sin remain unsubdued in his heart and practice. Yet how many thousands are there in this very situation, like so many condemned criminals, rattling their fetters and dancing in their chains, not knowing but the next moment they may be dragged to execution ; and if at any time the unwelcome thought of death intrudes itself, they either try to dose themselves with the black opium of infidelity, or else buoy themselves up with some random hopes of the mercy of God, in defiance of his justice, purity, truth, and holiness. The Scriptures alone account for this madness, by representing man as being naturally asleep and dead in sin, and as being totally void of all spiritual understanding, till that same power which moved upon the face of the waters at the first creation, and by an Almighty *fiat* spake the world into being, move upon the dark chaos of the heart, and say, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light ;” or as the same Apostle elsewhere expresses it, “God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.” Without this, everything else which passes current for religion in the world, is nothing but drudgery and lip-labour—a poor, wretched, dry, insipid, lifeless, formal piece of ceremony, which, whilst it never can afford its mistaken professors one ray of comfort, only leads them further and further from God, leaving

them as much under the power of their own fallen nature, as much influenced by worldly maxims and tempers, and as totally ignorant of all the real blessings of the gospel, pardon, peace, love, joy in the Holy Ghost, fellowship with God, &c., as if Christ had no such blessings to bestow. But I have no need to say anything to guard you against such a Pharisaic delusion as this. You know well that *the form of godliness without the power, or to have a name to live and be dead*, will profit you nothing; and I know, too, that you have so much sensibility and tenderness of disposition, that ten thousand trials, disappointments, and unwelcome occurrences which you will certainly meet with through life (for "man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards") and which would not at all affect many others, will often tease you and prey upon your mind, and will all conspire to preach to you much louder than any of R. H.'s letters, that this is not your resting place; that all below is vanity and vexation of spirit, and that if you would enjoy any solid peace and happiness, you must seek it in the possession of that faith which can alone enable you to overcome the world, and to rejoice in hope of the glory that shall be revealed.

If I can be of any service to you in —, whilst you are in London, the more freely you will honour me with your commands, the more you will oblige,

My dear —,

Yours very sincerely,

R. H.

Notwithstanding all the pains Mr. Hill took to convince his correspondent of the importance of true religion, his efforts failed of success; for the gentleman he addressed was embarrassed with serious misgivings as

to the authenticity of some portions of the Scriptures. Mr. Hill deplored his having listened to the cavils against the book of life, which he told him "he had never seriously read through," and begged him to consult certain writers, "before whom the mists of infidelity flee away as the fogs before the noon-day sun." He particularly recommended to his perusal "*Leslie's Short and Easy Method with the Deists*," in which treatise he considered the author to have proved "by arguments as demonstrable as any propositions in Euclid, that there are four marks attending the miracles of Moses and of Christ which never did, and never can, accompany any falsehood whatsoever." Notwithstanding these doubts, Mr. Hill's friend acknowledged the necessity of renouncing his sins, but seemed to think he had powers of his own by nature to resist temptation and overcome the world. Upon this his faithful monitor observed, "You believe that you have in yourself power to serve God acceptably, to repent, to overcome the world, to renounce your sins and unlawful pleasures. You allow that it is absolutely necessary that you should do all this, and yet you continue to live in sin, after the course of this world, without prayer and without repentance. Oh! my dear inconsistent friend, how does your own mouth pronounce you unjustifiable!" Such were the faithful appeals of Mr. Hill to the conscience of his refined, gentlemanlike friend, who, it seems, in addition to his notions of the powers of the human will, had stumbled exceedingly at the doctrine of Predestination. However, after all that has been narrated of Mr. Hill's strenuous support of his opinions on this point, against Wesley, Fletcher, and their coadjutors, the way in which he treated the subject in these letters cannot fail to excite curiosity and interest. He wrote thus—

“ Upon the principles of Christian predestination, you are still not less inconsistent ; because you go about to *separate* two things which are *inseparably* joined together, viz., the end and the means which lead to it ; and then you fly to the old threadbare objection of Papists, Quakers, and Arminians—‘ if I am elected, I shall be saved, do what I will ; if I am not elected, I must be damned, do what I can.’ Now, this is the *abuse* of the doctrine, but by no means the doctrine itself, holiness of heart and life being the middle link of that chain, which connects God’s eternal decree with the execution of that decree in the salvation of all his elect. And if you can cast your eyes upon the Christian world in general, you will find that real practical religion is more to be found among those who adopt the Scripture plan of predestination, than among those who reject it. But let us have recourse to a familiar illustration of the point in hand.

“ When Archbishop Chicheley founded All Souls’ College, in Oxford, he made a decree that they who in future times were *founder’s kin* should succeed to the fellowships of that College, in preference to all others. This decree is inviolable in the choice of the candidates ; but I never heard of one that intended offering himself, who reasoned after this manner—‘ if I am founder’s kin, I must succeed, do what I will, or even whether I offer myself or not.’ No, but they all go about to prove their pedigree and relationship to the founder, and for this purpose they anxiously search the old book entitled *Stemmata Chicilianæ*, and apply themselves diligently to their probation exercises, in order that no requisite may be wanting on their parts. Now, my dear ——, produce your pedigree, and learn your exercise, and the thing is done. Take but the same pains (though surely

you ought to take more) to prove your relationship to the great founder of the universe, whose decree is that none shall partake of his spiritual blessings, but those who bear a relationship to him through faith in Jesus Christ; apply yourself to the study of that old book the Bible, from which alone you can trace your descent, and study your exercise as becomes a candidate for an heavenly fellowship with God and glorified spirits. Set about this in earnest, and I will venture my own soul upon the safety of yours; for though I cannot climb up into heaven to read God's decree, yet I shall be very certain from that middle link of the chain which is let down upon earth, that it is in your favour. But if you neglect this, surely the diligence of every individual that ever stood for a fellowship at All Souls' College, must condemn the supine indifference of my dear ——, who I hope will believe me to be with great sincerity,

His truly faithful friend,

R. H.

P.S. The conversation you had with the *predestinarian* ladies, has made them heartily join with me in the most earnest wishes for your spiritual welfare; and this day they proposed that we should meet together to pray for you. This was done, and I believe from all our hearts.

I have been thinking of Mr. Hume's bringing the children of Israel over the isthmus, instead of through the Red Sea. But if this were the case, how could Moses appeal to them the very same day, that he had brought them through the water; and that they themselves had seen Pharaoh and all his host drowned before their eyes? Was the fact of so private a nature, that neither the Israelites nor any in the land of Egypt could contradict it?

But the Israelites might have concurred with Moses in the cheat. Then they must have known him to be an impostor ; and nevertheless they could not be Jews but upon the supposition of his being a true prophet, sent from God to bring them out of bondage into the promised land.

But perhaps it was all an invention, that the Jews were four hundred and thirty years in Egypt, and that they were afterwards brought out through the Red Sea precisely at the time foretold. Perhaps Pharaoh never pursued after them, and perhaps, too, there never was such a person as Moses, the Jewish lawgiver. Then, I say, if you follow the plainest chain of reasoning, it is most clear that there never could have been a Jew."

The more one reads of all illustrations of the subject of the divine decrees, the more true will the opinion of Mr. Rowland Hill appear, that God's foreknowledge is not for us, but for himself.¹ Mr. Richard Hill received no answer for some time to this last letter, and accordingly addressed the following brief note to his friend :—

MY DEAR —,

I have written to you two or three times and can get no answer. Are you alive or dead ? I wish you to convince me that you are alive, but remember that nothing less than ocular demonstration will do this. In the meanwhile, I cannot help suspecting that you are both dead and alive at the same instant. If this seems a paradox, St. Paul's words will help you to

¹ See my Reflections and Devotions of the Rev. Rowland Hill. Second Edition.

an explanation—"She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." 1 Tim. 5, 6.

Believe me,

My very dear friend,

Yours most affectionately,

R. H.

These letters appear to have had no beneficial effect upon the man of the world to whom they were addressed; for his mind had been poisoned by the delusive reasonings of Hume, so that he ventured to joke with Mr. Hill upon the solemn topics of his correspondence. The next letter explains itself; it is also extremely indicative of the very peculiar turn of thought of its author, as well as of the warmth of his feelings and the excellence of his temper.

Hawkstone, June, 1775.

MY DEAR ———,

If you knew what a *boring* I was obliged to suffer from ———, when your servant brought your kind letter, you would very readily excuse me for having sent no answer to it by him; however, I now return my thanks for it, as well as those of all the family, for your present of lampreys, which we are very sorry you had the trouble of sending so far.

As to your *little irony* about the *predestination of the shads*,¹ what our Lord says of a bird (Matt. x. 29) I firmly believe holds good of a fish; *for though birds and fishes are comparatively insignificant animals, yet very great events are very often brought about by very little

¹ An excellent fish known in the Severn.

causes. Birds and fishes have destroyed men's lives ; and birds and fishes have saved them. A cackling goose delivered the Capitol. Mahomet carried on his imposture by means of a pigeon ; and (if I may be allowed to quote Scripture testimony) a fish which St. Peter caught, furnished the piece of money which paid tribute both for Christ and the Apostle. Every creature exists by the will of God ; and by the same will the exact time and place of every creature's existence is determined ; and not only so, but every creature is in some way or other, however unseen by us, accomplishing the designs of the all-wise and all-powerful Creator. Take away this truth, and you deny a particular providence. Take away a particular providence, and in effect you fall into downright atheism. So that, whatever difficulties may attend the doctrine of predestination, infinitely greater are those on the other side of the question. And if you admit an unalterable decree with regard to the universe in general, the motion of the earth, of heavenly bodies, the laws of matter, the government of states and kingdoms, the period when such and such individuals should flourish—Cyrus and Alexander, for example, whose time and the work allotted them are expressly foretold in Scripture—I say, if you admit thus much, where will you draw the line afterwards, since the greatest and most wonderful events all depend upon a thousand more, some of them seemingly of little importance, and others by human eye, perhaps, totally overlooked ? And can it be supposed that everything which relates to this perishing world, which only stands as a preparatory scaffold to a much more noble building not made with hands, is ordered by infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, whilst the government of the moral, intellectual, and spiritual world, the care of man's immortal part, and all the concerns of

eternity are left at random, to depend on the fickle will of the creature, whether he choose to defeat or accomplish the designs of Omnipotence, and to introduce order or anarchy into the counsels of heaven? What an idea indeed (to borrow my dear friend's own expression) does this give of the Supreme Being!—as well as what a gloomy prospect does it afford to every soul who is in the least degree sensible of his own weakness and insufficiency, and who desires to acknowledge his entire dependence on Him who “ordereth all things after the counsel of his own will,” and who hath promised to “make all things work together for good to those who love him, and who are the called according to his purpose!”

These things are so clear and self-evident to me, that if I did not see the doctrine of predestination manifestly revealed in the Scriptures, I could not receive them as containing the mind and will of Jehovah, and yet I had rather have kept clear of this subject, had you not been perpetually introducing it. But behold! through what a labyrinth I have been led, from the simple circumstance of your telling me “that you had toiled many days and had taken no shads, and that if none are predestinated to be taken, *on a beau pecher*.” Let me, however, dismiss the subject with desiring that whatever you may do when you are fishing in the Severn, you will take care how you get out of your depth when you are endeavouring to wade through the profound waters of God's decrees, free agency, &c., lest (if Mr. Hume will excuse the simile) your feet, like Pharaoh's chariot wheels, should be entangled in the mud, and you should at last sink into the bottomless pit. Above all, my dear fisherman, beware of being carried away by the stream, for of this you are in the greatest danger; therefore lower

your sails, and put some good ballast into your little bark.

* * * * *

I therefore beg to inform ——— that (V. D.), the *predes-tinarian* ladies, ———, and I intend setting out for Buxton on Tuesday next, from which place I hope to be back by the eleventh of next month, in order on that day to attend the sessions, which, though they are fixed by the *decree* of the legislature, I do not expect to be present at without mounting my horse and riding to Shrewsbury. I heartily wish my kind ——— were to be of the party of the Buxtonians, but that would be too great an honour and pleasure for his ——— to expect.

Well! my dear friend, whether you go to Buxton or not, you are several days nearer to your unchangeable state in eternity than when I wrote last; but the question is, are you any better prepared for it, and what are your views concerning it? Whether your principles or mine be true, it is out of dispute that ——— must soon meet death. DEATH! terrible word to man in a state of nature! DEATH! sweet word to man in a state of grace! But is the thought of it welcome to you? Or can you even account for its first entrance into the world? One generation passeth away and another cometh, but does death put an end to their existence? Is man introduced into this great theatre only to eat, drink, sleep, and take his pastime therein? Is he to be happy independently of Him who formed him? You do not, cannot think so; and yet you seem to be perfectly easy and content, though for aught you know, you must be miserable through millions, millions, millions, millions, never expiring millions of ages. As I am most fully persuaded of the truth of the Scriptures, I

cease to wonder at seeing my very dear, sensible friend acting so unwise (why may I not say so mad) a part ; but that very book, which in the space of a hundred years more he supposes will be exploded, in the most rational manner accounts for all his irrational conduct. Your truly worthy ancestor ——— properly compares this world to an inn, and all the inhabitants to so many guests who are travelling to their journey's end. Now, my dear ———, this comparison is equally just whether my sentiments or yours be right. You are a traveller from time to eternity, whether you will or no. You are riding post to the grave, *bon gré, mal gré* ; and your marvellous infatuation about what is to befall you at your journey's end, will be seen, though in a very faint light, if you will only suppose yourself at a very wretched *cabaret*, where you were obliged to stay one single night, and to set out early next morning for ———. Now suppose that instead of appointing Mr. ——— the upholsterer, Mr. ——— the painter, and Mr. ——— the designer, to meet you at ——— where you hope to pass your whole life, you were to send for them all to this miserable alehouse ; and were there to order the one to paint, the other to furnish, and the third to lay out the garden, in order that you might have every thing *comme il faut*, during your one day's residence. You would certainly never do this if you were in your senses. But what less are you doing, my dear ———, whilst you are paying your whole attention to the poor transitory things of time and sense, and leaving your soul and eternity far out of sight ? But do not mistake me by supposing that I am blaming you for any alterations which you are making in or about your house or park, for I only mention these things by way of familiar illustration. As to all the objections which you have raised, as so

many lofty towers and bulwarks against the great truths of the gospel, however formidable they may at present appear, I know that one breath of Almighty power can instantly level them to the dust ; so that to speak in Scripture language, they shall fall like the walls of Jericho before the sounding rams' horns. Or, if you prefer it, to speak in the theatrical style, " they shall flee away like the baseless fabric of a vision, and leave not a wreck behind." If it please the Lord to give you the least sight of the infinite demerit of sin, and of the dreadful state your own soul is most assuredly in because of it, then that Saviour to whom you have hitherto been a stranger and an enemy, will indeed be received by you with joy and gladness in his true character of the sinner's friend. I have not therefore the less hope of you on account of your present opposition ; but I draw some very favourable conclusions in your behalf, on account of the wonderful patience with which you suffer me to write and speak to you. I am as certain that I tell you the truth, as I have the pen now in my hand, or as there are at this moment fools at —— races ; and the great importance of these truths must apologize for my earnestness, if I would prove myself what I always hope to be,

My dear ——,
Yours most affectionately
And sincerely,
R. H.

Mr. Hill was ever ready to avow his sentiments and to honour his Saviour in all places and before all manner of persons. In conversation, in letters, in general society, and afterwards in Parliament, he declared that the word of God was his only guide.

He would have acted, however, more prudently if he had not forced upon his friend his own views of predestination as he did, however freely he might have chosen to discuss them with established Christians. The importance he attached to them grew very much out of his contest with the Wesleyans ; but it has been seen that no man more earnestly deprecated the unhallowed inferences the world drew from his sentiments, though he ought to have taken a hint from them to be more clear and guarded in his statements, and less severe upon persons of piety who could not agree with him. His mistakes are, however, attributable as much to the times as to himself, and we must make due allowances. The fidelity of the correspondence in this chapter will be admired by all, and the next instance of it is not less striking than the foregoing, if not equally powerful in appeal.

MY VERY DEAR —,

So you have been reading Mr. Hume again ! As formidable a being as Mr. Addison's fly upon the pillar in St. Paul's Cathedral ; but if your heart were once broken with a real sense of sin, all his specious reasonings against Christianity would appear to you as so many pepper-corns shot out of a pop-gun against Dover Castle.

There is a sentence in your letter which makes me smile ; it is the following :—" I think your doctrines calculated to reconcile a man to his *worst* actions, and to license him in doing whatever he pleases, &c." My dear —, how widely do you still mistake the nature of the Scripture predestination which has holiness for its aim, and heaven for its end. It is as impossible for

the elect to be without care to live well, as for the sun to be without light ; obedience to God's commands being as much a part of their predestination as their celestial inheritance itself, and therefore we so frequently read in the sacred pages that all true Christians *are predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's dear Son ; that they are chosen in him that they might be holy and without blame ; that they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them.* In like manner the Church of England in her 17th Article, when she is describing the character of the elect, thus distinguishes them ;—“ they feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying their corrupt affections, drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things, and they walk religiously in good works.” But if neither the testimony of Scripture nor of the Church of England is to be admitted, let experience and matter of fact speak. Who are the persons that seem *most reconciled to their worst actions*, and think *they may live as they list* ? Your predestinarian, or your antipredestinarian friends ? The ladies who went from —— to —— to hear a sermon at St. ——'s church, or those who hope to shine at the ensuing races at —— assembly ?

You tell me you are going into —— . I am sorry for it, as I suppose you will not soon return into Shropshire. His Grace of —— I will engage is no predestinarian ; and yet, without breach of charity, I venture to pronounce he is well enough *reconciled to his worst actions, and thinks himself at liberty to do what he pleases.* I also venture to affirm that though you and the young peer are both of a mind in this respect, yet both of you will be as silent upon the important concerns of eternity, all the while you are together, as if

there were no God, no future state, and as if neither of you had an immortal soul to be for ever lost, or for ever saved. Be this as it may, how does my dear antipredestinarian friend at —— now find his own heart affected upon the review of his past sins? Has the mighty freedom of his will taught him to loathe himself for his iniquities, and to labour earnestly after exemplary holiness both of heart and life? If not, is he not too *well reconciled to his worst actions*, and does he not still to all appearance, *think himself at liberty to act as he pleases*? Permit me therefore to assure him that a state of reconciliation to God, and reconciliation to sin are absolutely incompatible, and that all those who have taken God for their portion to enjoy, will surely take his will for their rule to follow.

Tell me whether you intend being at Shrewsbury for the assizes on the Saturday or on the Monday, as I mean to be there on the former day, because my predestinarian principles give me a much stronger *penchant* to attend the little vicar on the Sunday, than to whisper *douceurs* in my partner's ears at the ball on Monday; and take notice that if you are true to your own principles, I must certainly find you under deep repentance for your past sins, and stedfastly resolving to give up your own will in every thing, and seeking only to serve and please God; else what you have advanced against predestination will justly be retorted upon free will.

Believe me, &c.

R. H.

Though Mr. Hill was a strenuous defender of his views of predestination, he was an implacable foe to antinomianism; and the sentiments contained in this letter on the necessity of personal holiness as the evidence of our

“ election,” will be acquiesced in by true Christians of every shade of opinion. Where notions of doctrine end in the same glorious longing for the image of the Redeemer, impressed upon the heart by the Holy Spirit, and rendered visible in the loveliness of devoted obedience, we must look upon every hue of some peculiar tenet as only one of the colours of the prism below, which shall blend together in celestial brightness, when we meet in white robes before the pure light of the eternal throne above.

But Mr. Hill writes again.

MY DEAR ———,

By the message which was returned from ——— when I sent the birds, I concluded it would be some time before your return from ———, otherwise I would have certainly gone to Salop on purpose to have met you there ; but now when I may expect that pleasure, I know not, unless you can come over to Hawkstone before the end of the month.

I often think of you, my dear ——— ; often with pleasure, often with grief. I understand you are to be very happy this week with your antipredestinarian friends, (all of whom I fear are well enough *reconciled to their worst actions*) ; but be assured none of them wish you a more substantial happiness than

MY DEAR ———,

Your very affectionate,

R. H.

Two more letters conclude this remarkable series of faithful expostulations.

Sept. 15th, 1775.

MY DEAR

Yesterday, upon my return from Shrewsbury Church, I had the pleasure of my dear —'s letter, and though he is pleased to give me a gentle hint concerning my want of punctuality, yet when he considers that he did not absolutely promise to be at the assizes, but only spoke conditionally, and kindly desired to know whether his predestinarian friend would be there; and that he himself had left Shropshire before that friend's answer could arrive at —; and also that the verbal message brought back by the man who took the birds (viz. "they will be very fine ones by the time my master returns,") made that same *predestinarian* conclude that his much esteemed *free-willer* intended to stay in — at least till he had effected the conversion of his Grace of — and of — —, which might perhaps be a work of rather more time than a fortnight.

These circumstances being all laid together and properly weighed, with the additional consideration that R. H.'s indifferent state of health really made it then needful for him to use the prescribed means for its establishment, will in a moment acquit him of every shadow of neglect or slight towards one, whose friendship and good opinion no earthly motive whatever could induce him willingly to forfeit. Taking it therefore for granted that upon summing up the evidence, you will bring me in *not guilty*, I beg you will let me know when you will come to Hawkstone. Sir Rowland and my sister intend setting out for Bath next Monday, but I must remain here till the eleventh of next month, on which day (V. D.) I shall follow them; and if in the mean while, (the sooner the more agreeable to me) you will visit me

in my solitude, I shall be the more obliged to you. But what a strange visit will this appear to you, after your —— expedition to the noble cricket-player ! And what will your numerous antipredestinarian friends all think of you, if they know of our snug *tête-à-tête* ? No doubt our very correspondence fills them with surprise ; and they will suppose that one or the other of us is certainly *coming over*. However, I think the late visit and transactions at —— will keep you pretty clear from any imputations of Methodism, or of being in the despised number of those who are predestinated to hate sin, and to love God's commandments ; so that all the danger of censure will be on my side.

You bid me withdraw the curtain from before your eyes. I would gladly do it, but the task is far too arduous for human power to accomplish. However, as we ought never lose sight of the concatenation between the end and the means, I would not be wanting in the use of the latter. But, my dear ——, if I must speak the awful truth, I often tremble for you under the apprehension that you have provoked God to give you up to a seared conscience and a reprobate mind, and that all I have said to you will one day rise up in judgment against you. In the state you are in, nothing separates you from everlasting destruction, but the breath in your nostrils. This thought affects you not, but (pardon the comparison) you are like the poor moth which giddily plays about the candle, till it falls into the flame and is burnt. You are making up your happiness in sin ; therefore, unless you repent, you must inherit the just wages of sin, which that authority you have so long despised declares to be DEATH ETERNAL. And instead of using the means for convincing your judgment and humbling your heart, you screen your infidel principles

and plead for your licentious practices in a most shameful abuse of those very doctrines, which, O, strange to tell! you affirm you do not believe. Do not, therefore, my dear, dear friend, begin at the wrong end, but prove your conversion, and then never question your election. Infinite wisdom has left an excellent receipt upon record, for persons who are in doubt about the truth of the Scriptures. It is the following:—"If any man will *do* his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." John vii. 17. Try this receipt (though there is one at your elbow will tell you it is a nauseous one), and if it should fail, then never take another prescription from

My dear ——,

Yours most affectionately,

R. H.

Hawkstone, Feb. 10th, 1776.

MY DEAR ——,

I have had many anxious thoughts about you since you left Hawkstone, particularly the day on which you parted from us, when the weather proved so unfavourable that I was afraid you would be wet to the skin before you could possibly reach ——; and as you had been so indifferent before with the influenza, the remains of which had hardly left you, I frequently wished you had either taken the chaise or the oilcase. Do not, therefore, my dear ——, refuse me the pleasure of a line to let me know that my fears were and are ill-grounded. I am sure nobody has a greater share of my affection, nobody of my concern, than yourself; and every time the post has come in of late, I have thought with myself "what can be the reason that dear —— will not let

R. H. see his hand-writing?" I then turn my eyes towards your glass and chimney-piece in ———, and the mystery is resolved. The Duke of *this*, and Lord and Lady *that*, present compliments to Mr. ———, and desire the honour of his company to dinner—to a ball—to a concert—to cards—perhaps on Sunday next! Ah, my dear friend, have you an immortal spirit within you? Are you the child of a day, and yet the heir of eternity; and is it thus you are fitting yourself for that untried state on which you are so soon to enter? What a sad and awful proof does your conduct afford me, of the certainty of those declarations which you have so frequently and so strenuously opposed! How happens it that I see a man of sound sense and solid judgment acting a part with regard to eternity, which in any common affairs of life, would be deemed the most extravagant folly? I cannot answer the question. But I look into the sacred pages, and there I find it recorded of all the children of men universally in a state of nature, that "madness is in their hearts till they go down to the dead;"¹ and that "the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

You know I have always dealt with you with that sincerity and openness which my real regard for you, and the importance of the subject required; and as a further instance of this, I now declare to you, whilst a faithful tear is ready to water my paper, that the last time I saw you I thought you appeared less candid in your inquiries, and more prejudiced against the truths of the Bible than you were some time ago. Christ himself has affirmed

¹ Eccles. ix. 3. The text is not correctly quoted, as sometimes happens with Sir R. Hill, who was intent on the substance only. But it is desirable to be *very* accurate in quoting Scripture.

(as I think I observed to you in a former letter) that “he who doeth his will, shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether he speaketh of himself.” Whilst, therefore, you are consulting and following your *own will*, instead of the will of him who spake these words; and whilst you are determined at all events to brave it out against God, you are in a spirit directly opposite to that unto which grace is promised; nor can you have the least reason to complain that all is darkness round about you, and that you can arrive at no certainty as to these things, till you can appeal to your own heart and say, “Jesus Christ has declared, he that doeth my will shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, &c.; but I have with the most unprejudiced temper, and with the deepest anxiety of soul, endeavoured to search out what that will is, and I have made it my constant care and study to conform myself thereto, in the whole tenor of my life and practice, yet still I am but just where I was, nor can I attain sufficient proof and evidence to convince me of the truth of the Scriptures.” Have you any right, my dear ——, to make this complaint? Your own conscience tells you that you have not.

I cannot at present fix my time for being in London. My sister H[ill] being just gone up to spend a month with Mr. and Mrs. T[udway], I shall most likely stay with my father till she returns.

My paper is so full I have scarcely room to subscribe myself,

My dear ——,

Your most sincere friend,

R. H.

No description could convey an equal idea with these let-

ters, of the real disposition and opinions of their author. Agreeing with him, or differing from him, the Christian reader will rise from perusing them with high admiration of such honesty of character, mingled probably with some regret at the singularly mixed constitution of Mr. Hill's mind, of which his brother Rowland not a little partook. Yet who can read these pious appeals without much self-rebuke, at the loss of opportunities of doing good in intercourse with men of the world, and a holy resolution, by God's assistance, of neglecting no future occasion of speaking plainly on the solemn concerns of eternity? Such sacred fidelity makes us forget the little spots in the writings and judgment of Mr. Richard Hill, and ought also to cause us to be ashamed that while we may have avoided his more venial errors, we have fallen far short of his integrity and zeal.

CHAPTER X.

PIETAS REDINGENSIS. "A MODERATE DIVINE." EXTRACTS FROM MR. HILL'S LETTERS TO MR. WAINHOUSE IN DEFENCE OF MR. HALLWARD. SPIRIT IN WHICH HE CONCLUDED. WESLEY LAYS THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE CITY-ROAD CHAPEL. MR. ROWLAND HILL'S INDIGNATION AT HIS ADDRESS ON THAT OCCASION. HIS LETTER, AND TESTIMONY TO WHITFIELD'S REGARD FOR THE CHURCH. DEATH OF TOPLADY. WESLEY AND MR. RICHARD HILL. OBSERVATIONS ON THE GREAT REVIVALISTS AND THEIR TIMES. LETTER OF MR. HILL TO A ROMAN CATHOLIC FRIEND. HIS NOTION OF FREEWILL.

ATTACK ON MR. HALLWARD.

THE natural result of the course pursued by Mr. Hill, was opposition from the world ; and we who live under very different circumstances, can scarcely appreciate what a man of his station in society had to sacrifice to his zeal and opinions. He was one of those rare individuals who determined to follow truth through every difficulty, and at any cost. Hence, whenever the faithful ministers of his day were assailed, he was sure to appear as the defender of their unpopular doctrines. In fact, he had scarcely come to a truce with Fletcher and Wesley, before he felt himself called upon to support his brother's early friend,¹ Mr. Hallward, in the midst of some violent and unjust attacks. The history of this

¹ See my Life of the Rev. Rowland Hill. Third Edition.

good man is known to all persons conversant with the narrative of the life of the excellent Mr. Cadogan,¹ who in his days of prejudice, expelled Mr. Hallward from his curacy at Reading, and afterwards besought his return in language of heartfelt penitence. On St. Thomas's Day, 1774, at the annual commemoration of "West's Charity," in Reading, Mr. Hallward preached a sermon on Titus iii. 8, the publication of which, for particular reasons, was deferred till November, 1775. In this discourse, his object was to state the Scriptural doctrine of good works, and to place them in the same evangelical view which our Church takes of them. He was bitterly censured for his opinions by an anonymous writer in the Reading Mercury, and called an "inconsistent, damning, harsh, uncouth, flighty, rhapsodical, odious, uncharitable, preacher;" for such were the epithets men calling themselves *orthodox*, were pleased in those times to apply to their evangelical brethren. This anonymous condemner of Mr. Hallward's doctrines proved to be one Mr. Wainhouse, some time Curate of St. Giles's Church, where the sermon was delivered. To him Mr. Hill addressed a series of letters in defence of his friend, and called the pamphlet in which they were collected *Pietas Redingensis*, or Reading Piety; and certainly the way in which he exposes the oppugner of the sermon, left that theologian no room to congratulate himself on the imaginary victory he had obtained over doctrines, clearly proved to be declared in the Bible, and maintained by the Established Church. In one of these letters, dated Hawkstone, Feb. 5, 1776, a passage occurs so extremely indicative of the humour of its author, that I cannot refrain from quoting it. An outcry was made against

¹ See also my Life of Rev. Rowland Hill, p. 128. Third edition.

the *Methodists*¹ as enthusiasts, and they were contrasted with a class more pleasing to the world, called *moderate divines*. The phrase tickled Mr. Hill's keen faney, and he asked Mr. Wainhouse, "What is a *moderate divine* according to the common acceptance of the phrase now-a-days?"—and thus proceeded to answer his own question:—"A *moderate divine*, then, is one who has a very *moderate* share of zeal for God; consequently, a *moderate divine* contents himself with a very *moderate* degree of labour in his Master's vineyard. A *moderate divine* is one who talks and preaches a great deal about good works, but is satisfied with a very *moderate* portion of them himself. A *moderate divine* is too polite and rational to give any credit to the antiquated divinity of our articles, homilies, and liturgy, and therefore he seldom quotes them, except it be to shew his contempt of them, or to torture their meaning: nevertheless, a *moderate divine* is ready enough to subscribe to them, if by so doing he can get an *immoderate* share of Church preferment. A *moderate divine* is always very calm and cool in his pulpit harangues, except when he is preaching against such troublers of Israel as the pious and lowly Mr. Hallward, and then a *moderate divine* loses all his *moderation*. A *moderate divine* is usually an advocate for card parties, and for all assemblies except religious ones; but thinks no names too bad for those who *assemble* to spend an hour or two in prayer and hearing God's word." There was truth in this sarcasm, to which was added the following more serious counsel: "Remember that oaths and subscriptions are solemn things; and that he who searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins, will not be put off with trifling equivocations.

¹ The name then given, not to the Wesleyans only, but to all the Revivalists.

For my own part, I have made it an observation, that when men once begin to take liberties with the Scriptures, and to introduce sects and divisions into a sound orthodox Church, they seldom stop till they fall into downright deism." Mr. Wainhouse called Mr. Hallward a *Methodist*, for which Mr. Hill thus rebuked him: "Why, Sir, must you force in the old bugbear name of *Methodist*? Why will you, who are a clergyman and a gentleman, stoop so low?" And again, "Do you think that reproachful words will forward your cause?"—and then, "Do pray, Sir, vouchsafe to give the public a definition of the term, as I have of that of a *moderate divine*." One of Mr. Hill's letters ends in this beautiful strain—"I beg you will give me leave to conclude with assuring you, that for whatever may have been blameworthy in my correspondence with you, I am willing to take shame to myself; and so far as I may have defended the glorious truths of the gospel, I desire to give God all the glory. We are each of us creatures of a day, dying men and dying sinners, and therefore a very short period must determine which of us is in the right. I pray God we may both be suitably affected with these considerations, and through the riches of divine grace, may both of us at last be brought to those peaceful mansions where all discord shall be at an end, and nothing but love and harmony reign for ever and ever." This was the right spirit, and one that should always be maintained in all arguments on religious topics, and especially by members of the same Christian Church. Although the *orthodox* clergy, as they have been called, did most bitterly and unjustly oppose and misrepresent those of their brethren denominated *Evangelical*, yet their conduct was not always met in the right spirit. The ill example of estrangement and personal animosity

set by the former, was too readily followed by the latter, the only excuse for which was the low tone of morals prevailing throughout all ranks of men in the nation. Now, however, all bitterness is inexcusable; and every possible means of effecting a friendly union between churchmen, without compromise of principle, should be resorted to. Professing Christians must not contend after the manner of the world, nor must zeal be nursed in the cradle of resentment. Truth will be avenged on opposing error in its own way, and is only degraded by bitterness of spirit on the part of its friends.

I now pass on to other proceedings of Mr. Richard Hill and his brother Rowland. In the autumn of 1777, Mr. Wesley laid the foundation-stone of his chapel in the City Road, on which occasion he delivered an address that was considered by many persons, and particularly by Mr. Rowland Hill, as casting a slur upon the reputation of his friend Mr. Whitfield. Being himself an almost daily field preacher, he could not permit Wesley to lay claim to the eclat of setting the first example of that practice. He wrote "a letter to a friend" from Wotton-under-Edge, expressive of indignation at such a question being mooted in the address, and sent it to the press. It was couched in terms that I must confess are far from defensible, as he himself afterwards acknowledged. Had it been submitted to the eye of his elder brother before it was printed, it would have either not have appeared at all, or in a milder form. This I am convinced of from looking over a copy of it which Mr. Richard Hill corrected with his own pen, and that most unsparingly. One part, however, of this letter is curious, as giving an exact account of the circumstances attending Whitfield's first commencing preacher in the open air. "Dear Mr. Whitfield, being convinced of

sin, and of salvation through Christ alone, first went forth, and in the spirit and power of Elias, 'preached not himself, but Jesus the Lord.' For some time the largest churches throughout London, were open to him, and thousands upon thousands flocked to hear. This latter circumstance giving umbrage to some of the unconverted clergy, the pulpits became gradually shut against that great messenger of God, on which he acted as the prophets of old, and as our Lord Jesus himself, and as the apostles, and as our own English bishops, reformers, martyrs, and divines had anciently done before, by preaching in the *open air* to as many as had ears to hear. The first time Mr. Whitfield did this, was in Islington church-yard, on the churchwarden's refusal of the pulpit, which had been promised him." After this, Wesley, who "once thought it as great a sin to preach in a field, as to cut a throat," followed Mr. Whitfield's example, and was not, Mr. Rowland Hill affirms, the beginner of the work. He was, however, most offended by Wesley's observing, that "Mr. Whitfield by conversing with the dissenters, *contracted strong prejudices against the Church*," which drew from him the cutting remark, that Wesley "meant nothing more than to make the Church *a compliment*, while he was doing all he could to enlarge the body of dissenters wherever he went," by building dissenting meeting-houses all the kingdom over, and patronizing lay preachers, as well as by not scrupling to administer the sacraments in conventicles. As to Mr. Whitfield, few men knew him better than Mr. Rowland Hill, and therefore his statement relative to the love his valued friend entertained towards the Church, is very important. "Mr. Whitfield," he says in reply to Wesley's assertion, "though candid and charitable towards the persons of

dissenters, was still a zealous churchman in point of doctrine, discipline, and worship, as thousands and myriads of the most respectable witnesses throughout the three kingdoms, know and can testify." And again, "that he had strong prejudices *in favor* of the Church, evidently appeared throughout the whole of his writings, ministry, conversation, deportment, and conduct. This strong attachment to the Church of England was manifested more fully, if possible, in the latter part of his life, when he erected Tottenham Court chapel, entirely for the celebration of the Church service; and he has, more than once, been heard to protest solemnly—what indeed every body knew and daily saw—that he had sacrificed his health by reading the Liturgy, and even created jealousies in more than a few of his good old Tabernacle friends, by devoting so much of his time and strength to his beloved Tottenham." Such is the declaration of Mr. Rowland Hill respecting this zealous man's attachment to the Church; and it is only to be regretted that all the statements in his "letter" against Wesley, were not made in the same mild spirit. As, however, he subsequently deplored every harsh expression traced by his too hasty pen, and reviewed the whole controversy with sorrow, we can only look upon it as an error to be avoided by all who enter into discussions on the solemn subject of the doctrines of grace. When the "letter" was sent to Mr. Richard Hill, he erased several paragraphs; but it was too late to stop the publication. A circumstance nevertheless shortly afterwards occurred, which he thought it his duty to notice. This was a report he had heard respecting Mr. Wesley's account of the last moments of Mr. Toplady,¹ whom he seems to have had more difficulty in

¹ For the authentic account of his death, see my Life of the Rev. Rowland Hill.

forgiving, than any other of his opponents. His Journal, Dec. 27, 1775, contains the following words, which are part of his letter to Lloyd's Evening Post, in vindication of his *Calm Address to the American Colonies* : " As to reviewers, news-writers, London magazines, and all that kind of gentlemen, they behave just as I expected they would. And let them lick up Mr. Toplady's spittle still, a champion worthy of their cause." When Mr. Toplady died, a Mr. Robinson informed a friend of Mr. Richard Hill, that Wesley had assured him he was in black despair during his last illness, and that a greater imposition was never imposed on the world, than the account of his end published by his admirers. He added also, that none of his friends were permitted to see him, and that a Wesleyan preacher named Rhodes, declared his case to be equal to that of Francis Spira ; also, that a servant who waited on him was so horrified as to have joined Mr. Wesley's societies, signifying that what he had witnessed was very awful. When this reached the ears of Mr. Richard Hill, who knew the happiness of Mr. Toplady on his dying bed, he naturally felt deep uneasiness, but did not proceed in his first agitation, to adopt the best plan for inquiry into the truth of what he had heard. Instead of addressing himself at once to Mr. Wesley, he put some queries to him on the subject of the malignant rumour, through the medium of the General Advertiser, to which he did not annex his name. Wesley naturally refused to answer an anonymous series of questions, and demanded first to know their author. Upon this, Mr. Richard Hill at once avowed himself, but disclaimed any wrong intention, or disrespect to a gentleman of Mr. Wesley's age and function. He also named the authorities which had induced him to apply for the information he desired.

His conduct in this affair was that of a most straightforward man, while his regard for the character and opinions of Mr. Toplady, naturally induced him to endeavour to wipe off the stain with which he suspected Wesley had tried to blot his memory. Yet it would have been better if some of his observations had been spared, as is indeed constantly the case in all that is written upon such subjects. The epithet "scurrilous" had however been hastily applied to him by Wesley, who ought to have refrained from such expressions. The matter was never properly cleared up. Mr. Hill has recorded that two friends of Mr. Toplady called on Mr. Wesley, and that he avoided conversation, got hastily into a coach, and cried out, "Let those who are for peace leave these things alone,"—no very satisfactory fulfilment of his promise to answer the inquiries, if their author would declare himself.

In all these disputes there was wrong feeling in both parties ; but the many redeeming qualities of each, must be allowed by all who reflect upon their respective efforts in the cause of religion. The same pious ardour animated both Whitfield and Wesley ; but their characters were cast in different moulds. They were also, like other good men, fallible and erring, though devoted, zealous, and infinitely laborious. The errors of Whitfield chiefly originated in his fiery temperament ; but the nobler qualities of his fervent spirit developed themselves in an eloquence almost superhuman, which was the instrument of rousing thousands from the deathlike lethargy of indifference, and of calling thousands more from the bondage and misery of times grossly immoral, into the holy liberty of the gospel. His tremendous appeals were directed to persons of every degree. The courtly visitors to the waters of Bath, and the ignorant, de-

praved colliers of Kingswood, were alike conscience-smitten under a ministry, the power and fidelity of which were in his days without a parallel. His expressive features, his amazing energy of manner, his strength of voice and fluency of diction, enabled him to exercise at will the fullest power of commanding attention, which he made subservient, not to the vile purpose of exciting a crowd to evil, but of reclaiming them from it, through the purifying efficacy of the doctrines of the cross. Whatever may have been his opinions on the inscrutable subject of personal election, he never tainted his doctrines with the pollution of Antinomianism, nor refused to invite sinners to the Saviour, though he warned them of their inability to come, without the Father's drawing them by the influence of the Holy Ghost. More hearts were melted under the warmth of his descriptions of redeeming love, than were alarmed by his declarations of the terrors of judgment; and such was the impression in this respect made upon his converts, that they could scarcely utter his name without giving it the epithet of "dear." So little did he seek to please men, that one of his most prominent failings was a tendency to court persecution, as an evidence that the course of his actions was against the stream of the world. He was the noblest specimen of all the evangelists at large in his age, who sounded the gospel trumpet in the very heart of the enemy's encampment; and that when the professed soldiers of Christ had deserted his cause, allured to forsake it by the sensual pleasures of a sinful world, and the approval of the licentious multitude. But even then, there were more faithful pastors in the Church than historians have acknowledged, through resting upon common report, instead of having recourse to accurate investigation; and to such *regular* ministers, and not to

an eager Whitfield or calculating Wesley, is the renovated condition of our clergy to be attributed. Those pious churchmen admired the boldness of the great champion of religion now occupying our thoughts, and were astonished at the throngs of ungodly men who trembled at the glance of the weapons of heaven, as he wielded them in his strong and dextrous hand. They rejoiced also in the wide diffusion of the knowledge of Christ, but they calculated the aggregate effects of irregularity upon his Church in the nation, and were alarmed lest the too rapid luxuriance of the seed springing up, should exhaust itself, and the hope of a fruitful harvest be destroyed. But in all our blame and all our commendations, due regard must be had to the aspect of the times in which Whitfield came forward to agitate for good. Historians and biographers have taken their retrospective views too much through the media of their various prejudices and prepossessions; but all parties have done honour to this sometimes rash, frequently miscalculating, but sincere and self-denying man. Be it remembered also, that the light in which he moved was no more than that of the dawn of revival. The beams of the gospel sun as it ascended above the moral horizon, were only reflected from the clouds it was rising to dispel, when its radiance should be shed from a higher elevation in the heavens. Notions of duty now obvious to every sound believer, and ideas equally plain respecting the gentle alterative power of genuine Christianity, were then imperceptible even to the quick eye of Whitfield. When in America, he overlooked the character of slavery; and though he preached to the negroes, and called upon them as men endowed with immortal souls, he never reflected that it ill became him to be the purchaser of their bodies, and to be a trafficker in human

flesh, though he designed the profits to found a college in Georgia. Dark indeed must have been the time, in which such a man could have proposed to an Archbishop of Canterbury, to augment the income of this transatlantic institution by speculating in slaves, and it proves that only in a few things was he in advance of his age. The mighty projects of the emancipation of the negroes from the chains of temporal slavery, and the whole heathen world from the curse of idolatry and ignorance by missionary enterprise, were reserved for days of brighter light; nor has the full duty of the latter work, been as yet sufficiently impressed upon any Christian Church or nation. Whitfield therefore, must not be considered as a man of calculating wisdom and light beyond his times, further than his conviction of the necessity of awakening sleepers because the day was at hand. Yet, let this honored and devoted labourer have his due; and while we advert to his mistakes, let us remember that they would be inexcusable in ourselves, and that we are called upon zealously to cultivate those attractive and valuable graces, of which he was so eminent an example to the whole Christian world.

Nor, in a brief review of the character of his sometimes helper, and sometimes opponent in this race of evangelization, let us yield to any prejudices whatever, nor fail in a faithful notice of his frailties to give a fair prominence to all that was creditable, in that singular mixture of human infirmity and apostolic zeal, John Wesley. In some particulars he was much the superior of Whitfield; in others, he fell greatly below him, but he had the advantage of surviving him many years. He added to the art of commanding attention to his sermons, the tact of influencing and keeping his followers together, long after the fascinating sound of

his voice had ceased in their ears ; and such importance did his calculating prudence attach, and justly, to this object, that the means he took to effect it were often indefensible. He well knew how to appear to lead when he could not divert any stream that had set in against him, and was skilled to control insubordination by the spell of an authoritative presence. No man understood better the art of speaking *ex cathedrâ*, or how to keep any rival from occupying his seat while he lived, or filling it so as to extinguish his reputation after his decease. Ambitious, he unquestionably was, but so free was his ambition from anything sordid, that it appeared like the purest zeal, and probably he was at times almost unconscious of it himself. Unappalled by privations, unconquered by fatigues, patient and dignified, yet magnanimous under assaults and persecutions, never rash and always generous, he changed the regions he first traversed with hunger, thirst, and poverty, into scenes of joyous welcome and high religious festival. Such was the magic of his bearing and conversation, that an hour in his company made friends of his opponents. He suited equally the gravity of the aged, the seriousness of middle life, and the vivacity of youth, charming the first with his solemnity, the next with his information, and the last with his cheerfulness. Seldom has one been seen like him, when more than seventy winters had whitened his long and silken hair, without wrinkling his face or dimming the lustre of his eye, so that his smile awakened friendship while his years and experience commanded veneration. No sect in this kingdom can boast of such a founder as the one he reared ; and he left behind him the secret of augmenting it beyond the limits of any other. His followers have indeed much to be proud of in such a leader, in these

points of view ; but they need not defend his failings, nor weave his superstitions into unworthy chaplets for a tomb that has better adornments. It is true that he professed, and we are bound to believe that he felt, a deep regard for the Church of England ; but his system of doctrines, if system it may be called, can no more be engrafted upon that stem, than a vine upon the British oak. A union between the Establishment, and Methodism as it now stands, is impossible ; nay, a string of incongruities that would fill pages, might be easily gathered out of the writings of Wesley, to say nothing of the impossibility of interweaving with our standard many of his principal tenets. When Sir Richard Hill called his contradictions, placed side by side, a *farrago*, he spoke the truth, though he might have spared the sting of the expression ; and whenever the notions of perfection, and the necessity of *dating* the exact moment of conversion, or the Wesleyan views of *sensible* assurances, with others that could be named, are proposed to be joined to the Articles of the Church of England, it is as great an absurdity as to talk of adding the vapoury train of a comet to the glorious orb of the luminary of day. Wesley was as deficient in sound consistent theology, as Whitfield was in power to calculate effects, or to perpetuate the union of a body of Christians—but both preached Christ, and thus alike rescued multitudes from the wretchedness of ignorance. But there is this great difference in the results of their respective labours—no man now calls himself a disciple of Whitfield, while avowed Wesleyans are multiplying everywhere ; but Methodism will never make many converts from the upper and refined classes of society, and as church room and able ministers increase in the esta-

blishment, it will cease to draw adherents to the extent it has done, from any.

What would have become of us in the religious excitation of the last century, but for an enlightened band within the Church, who determined to adhere to its rules, no man may presume to say. This much, however, we know—they proved an incalculable blessing. Far be it from any candid churchman, to refuse the irregulars the honours that are due to them—to call Whitfield an enthusiast, or to withhold from Wesley all the commendation that zeal; self-denial, temperance, generosity, and unequalled exertions demand, especially when manifested in such an age of utter darkness. Even the polemics we have deplored were useful, for the moral atmosphere was cleansed in the strife of the elements.

I shall conclude this chapter with a plain but valuable production of Mr. Richard Hill. Although he held his own opinions with extreme tenacity, yet he was singularly free from allowing any difference of religious views, to separate between him and those whose integrity he respected, though their ideas were utterly at variance with his. Yet at the same time, he laboured to convince them of what he believed to be their errors. A delightful instance of this appears in a letter he wrote to a Roman Catholic friend, sincerely, though blindly, attached to that communion. It is a faithful, calm, and lucid exposure of some of the unscriptural tenets of the Church of Rome, and is calculated to be useful in the present times. He sent it to the press in the year 1778, with the motto "Search the Scriptures." It is as follows:—

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I shall not preface this letter with any apologies for my long silence. Suffice it to say, that if some unavoidable impediments had not prevented my writing, the important subject of your last certainly demanded a more speedy acknowledgment. However, I now return you my sincere thanks for it, and beg to offer, without any reserve, such considerations as occurred to me from the perusal of it.

It is a truth confessed and allowed both by Protestants and Roman Catholics, that Christ always was, always is, and always will be with his Church; and that this Church shall so far be guided into all truth, as never to be suffered to err in such a manner as to affect the eternal salvation of any of its members. The whole dispute, then, between us is, What is the true Church of Christ? And where is the Church to be found? Those of the Roman communion confine it wholly to themselves, as descending regularly from the time of the Apostles down to the present age; and suppose infallibility to be inseparable from the papal chair.

The Protestants affirm that by the Church is meant the body of all faithful people, from the beginning of the world to the end of it; all who are united to Jesus Christ the Head by living faith; all who are created anew, and regenerated by the Spirit of God, though differing from each other in some lesser outward matters. They moreover believe that infallibility no more belongs to the Bishop of Rome than any other Bishop; but that the only infallible guide is the Spirit of God, which ever teaches agreeably to that word of which he himself is the author; that therefore it must be highly displeasing to him who has graciously vouchsafed this divine in-

struction to his Church, to see any persons rely on man's authority; and instead of resting on the word of promise, that all God's children "shall be taught of him," fly to human traditions, and swallow down for truth whatever may be told them by those whose inclination or interest may have prompted them to take upon themselves the office of pastors, however contrary their lives may be to the precepts of that word whereof they profess themselves ministers; and even notwithstanding this very word assures us, that they only who "do his will, shall know the doctrine whether it be of God."

In answer to what you urge in defence of Freewill and Merit, I shall only say that all sound Protestants abhor these doctrines, as tending directly to establish the detestable and dangerous heresy of Pelagianism; making no difference between man in his fallen state, and Adam in his original state of innocence; and particularly as being subversive of the Apostle's declaration, that God "of his own will begat his children by the word of truth;" and that they who are such, "are not born of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God." That "when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants; so that all "boasting must be excluded," and "he that glorieth must glory only in the Lord." The way, therefore, in which true Protestants settle their belief, is not by making the Scripture submit to the traditions and decisions of men, but by comparing all human traditions and decisions with the sacred oracles of truth, and receiving or rejecting them according as they agree or differ from this standard. For instance, if the Scripture tells us that "in the latter days seducing spirits should arise, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe

and know the truth ;” if in any age of the Church, we find any prohibitions of meats, and such injunctions of celibacy, we reject them according to the Apostle’s own words, as “ the doctrines of devils,” and as the delusions of those whose character it is “ to speak lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron.” Nevertheless, whilst the Romanists absolutely forbid their clergy to marry, they profess to believe in that word which speaks of the wife of St. Peter, whom notwithstanding, they call their first Pope !

With regard to what you have offered in favour of Transubstantiation, I must beg leave to observe, that all Protestants reject this doctrine not only as a novelty unheard of in the six first centuries of the Church, but as subversive of the whole design of Christ’s suffering, which was, once by one offering, not by being many times offered, to obtain eternal redemption for us, and to perfect for ever them that are sanctified. But, to say nothing of the manifest absurdity of Christ in his human nature, being present in many thousand places at once, nor of the horrid idea of eating the God of heaven and earth, if there be, as the Roman Catholics suppose, a miraculous change of the bread and wine, it is the only miracle Christ ever wrought which contradicted the senses of the beholders ; and certainly the design of every miracle is to force conviction on the senses, but never to contradict them. As when our Lord at the marriage of Cana turned the water into wine, the change was evident by the taste, to the Governor of the feast and to all the guests.

It may be urged that what Christ has literally asserted, ought, however mysterious, to be literally believed. True, where it does not set the Scripture at variance with itself ; where it does not destroy the very

nature of a sacrament, by turning it into a sacrifice, and overthrow the whole design of our Lord's one offering for sin, as the doctrine of transubstantiation evidently does. Besides, this way of arguing would soon prove too much ; and we have the same authority to believe Christ to be literally a way, a door, or a vine-tree, as to suppose a piece of bread, or a consecrated wafer to be literally his body. Nor can I think it would be a whit less absurd and unscriptural to affirm, because Christ hath promised to come in and sup with those who open to him when he knocks, that therefore he literally and bodily comes down from heaven, and sits at table with us ; and that he himself having made this positive declaration, we ought not to reason about the manner in which it is done, any more than we ought to call in question the doctrines of the incarnation, and of a Trinity in unity, because these truths are so far above what our finite capacities can comprehend. But this is by no means a fair way of arguing, nor is the case at all similar ; for though the doctrines of a Trinity and of the incarnation are above our reason, yet they are not contrary to it, nor do they offer violence to any of our senses, as the doctrine of transubstantiation does.

We must therefore explain Scripture by Scripture, and by this unerring rule we shall clearly see that Christ is present at his table, just in the same manner as he is present with his Church, viz., not grossly and corporally, but divinely and spiritually ; and that when it is said, "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you," this must be understood of a spiritual feeding of the soul by faith, upon Christ, or, as it is styled by the Apostle Peter, a "tasting that the Lord is gracious ;" and indeed the passage itself will not, without manifest distortion, admit of any

other interpretation ; because the eating and drinking here mentioned, stands in connection with the life spoken of in the latter part of the verse, which life is without dispute the spiritual life of the soul, and not bodily or animal life. Either, therefore, it must be granted that the life mentioned in the latter clause is the life of the body, or else that the eating and drinking in the former clause, must be a spiritual eating and drinking.

Again, when our Lord says, “ He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him,” it is most certain that a material eating and drinking cannot be intended ; because thousands of wicked persons and such as are destitute of a lively faith, may, as saith St. Augustine, carnally press with their teeth the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, yet it can in no wise be said of them, that they dwell in Christ, and Christ in them, since this is only true of real believers.

It should further be particularly noticed that our blessed Lord, in this 6th chapter of St. John, speaks of the manna which was given to the Church under the Old Testament dispensation, as typical of himself, the true manna and living bread which came down from heaven. This manna Israel after the flesh ate in the wilderness for their bodily sustenance, thereby prefiguring that feast of fat things which was reserved for God’s spiritual Israel under the gospel, who now feed upon Christ by living faith ; and by virtue of their mystical union with him, through his Spirit dwelling in their hearts, their souls are nourished unto everlasting life, and they become one with Christ, and Christ one with them. But the Church of Rome, by interpreting the texts quoted out of this chapter, of a gross, carnal eating and drinking of Christ’s real body and blood, destroy the very end and idea of that more noble, divine, and

spiritual feast which believers feed upon under this better covenant, and to which they are more especially invited at the table of their Lord and Saviour, when, through the elements of bread and wine, they view him as really present to the eye of faith, for the strengthening and refreshing of their souls, during their pilgrimage through this wilderness world of sin and sorrow to the heavenly Canaan, as the Israelites of old, viewed the manna in the wilderness through which they journeyed, by the eye of sense, and by which their bodies were nourished till they arrived at the promised land. Yet even in this wilderness, those that were spiritual among the Jews, rested not in carnal ordinances and institutions, but looked through all the types and shadows under the law, to what the Apostle calls the more glorious times of reformation under the gospel.

But the doctrine of transubstantiation exactly harmonizes with the gross conceptions of the carnal Jews, when they asked, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" And therefore the same answer should be given to the Romanists as our Lord gave to them, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

Though in order to defend a corporal presence in the sacrament, the Church of Rome pleads for an adherence to the very letter of the Scripture; yet in some other of her tenets, she does not scruple to depart from the positive words of Holy Writ. [Of this we have an instance in] her denial of the cup to the laity, though our Lord has expressly said, "drink ye all of this;" and lest any in future times should confine this "all," to all his Apostles, or all his ministers, we find St. Paul, in his epistle to the whole church of Corinth, repeatedly enjoining a worthy drinking of the cup, as well as a worthy eating of the bread; and it is remarkable that in five

or six different places, in the same, and in the foregoing chapter, he never mentions receiving the bread, without drinking the cup; and instead of calling one the real body, and the other the real blood of Christ, he calls them "the communion of the blood of Christ," in conformity to his great Master, who has commanded us to receive both, not as his actual body and blood, but in remembrance of him. I know that the reason given by the Church of Rome, for depriving their members of one part of the Lord's supper is, that whosoever receives the body of Christ, must also receive his blood, since the blood cannot be separated from the body; but this way of reasoning renders the command of our Lord and St. Paul to receive both kinds quite needless, and is indeed to profess ourselves wiser than what is written. Besides, this argument again proves too much; for by the same rule, the priests themselves ought to receive the sacrament only in one kind.

Let me now ask what authority there is for the priest's receiving alone, whilst the people are kneeling all about him? The answer I suppose usually given, is because the priest offers up the sacrifice of the mass for the sins of the people. Bring only one text of Scripture in confirmation of this, and I will allow the truth and the necessity of it. But this cannot be done; though numberless texts may be produced to prove that it is striking at the very root of that most fundamental doctrine of Christianity, the satisfaction made for sin by the death of Christ; and that it in a manner brings believers back again to the ceremonial law, under which daily sacrifices were offered up; but these were to cease, when He who was the end of them all was to appear, and by the offering of his own body once for all, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. But they who look upon the mass

as a daily sacrifice for sin, are quite of a contrary mind to St. Paul, who tells us, “ that Christ needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s ; for this he did once, when he offered up himself.” “ Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others ; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world ; but now once in the end of the world, hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment ; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many,” and “ where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.”

I might now enlarge on the strange unscriptural custom of praying in an unknown tongue, and of offering supplications to departed saints, and to the Virgin Mary, to the great dishonor of the one Mediator between God and man. I might also say much on the idolatrous practice of bowing down before pictures and graven images, the work of men’s hands, in open violation of the second commandment, which says, “ thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing in heaven or in earth ; thou shalt not bow down to them,”¹ &c. I might further speak of the arrogant practice of granting pardons and indulgences, and might particularly expatiate on the doctrine of purgatory, which though it has not one text of Scripture for its own support, has brought plenty of gains for the support of the church’s power ; and this by undervaluing and almost making of none effect the sufferings of the Redeemer, which it does by supposing that any other

¹ It is well known that the Roman Catholics do not scruple to leave the Second Commandment out of the decalogue.

sufferings besides his, are necessary towards expiating and putting away the sins of those that shall be saved. The vain-glorious notion, also, of justification by men's own righteousness, and especially of works of supererogation, in defiance of the plain declaration of God's word, which tells us, that "when we have done all those things which are commanded us, we are unprofitable servants," might furnish me with matter for a volume. But neither my own time, nor the compass of a letter will allow me to dwell on any of these points; I shall therefore conclude what I have to say with my most earnest wishes and prayers, that the God of all grace would enable you to lay these things to heart with that seriousness which their great importance demands at your hands: and for this end, I beseech you diligently to examine your heart, as in the presence of Him to whom the secrets of it are all open, whether you are divested of all prejudice in favor of the Roman Catholic, and against the Protestant religion: and when you have done this, fear not to take into your hands those divine oracles, which God has graciously vouchsafed for your instruction, under the guidance of his blessed Spirit, though by the craft of designing men this inestimable gift is wrested out of the people's hands, in downright opposition to the divine command of Him who has positively enjoined us to "search the Scriptures," and whose [Apostle] so much commendeth the Bereans for having done so.

To the reading of God's word, add earnest prayer for divine illumination in your searches after truth; and in the use of these means, I doubt not you will soon be brought to see that the charge of novelty belongs not to the Church of England, or any other reformed Church, but to the Church of Rome; and that the stale question

so often put to the Protestants, “where was your religion before Luther’s and Calvin’s time?” may very properly be answered, by saying “it was where it is now, viz. in the Bible, where the creed of his Holiness could never yet be found.” Yet because the innovations of Popery have crept in by degrees, and in the darkest ages of superstition, therefore the Romish Church lays claim to antiquity, and brands the Protestant religion with the charge of novelty. But this is not less unreasonable, than if I were to see an ancient shield covered with rust, and from thence were to conclude that the rust was still more ancient than the shield itself. The rust indeed might carry the vestiges of antiquity, but still it was not originally upon the shield: remove the rust, and the pristine beauty of the shield will appear to view.

I beg to add one word more by way of conclusion. Should you by reading this letter, or any other means, be led to see that you have hitherto been in error, and thereupon to renounce your former principles, beware of a change of opinion without a change of heart; since nothing short of vital union with Christ, through the faith of his own operation, evidencing itself in a life of deadness to the world, and of devotedness to God, will stand you in any stead.

Indeed, my dear friend, I dare not call your sincerity in question. I believe you heartily wish to be found in the right way, and that you are striving to serve God in what you judge to be that way: and as you have been pleased to bear the same testimony of me, let me earnestly entreat you to attribute any expressions which may perhaps appear to you either too warm, or bearing too hard upon that Church in which you have been educated, to the effect of at least a well-meant zeal for what I

cannot doubt to be the truth of God, and of my unfeigned love and regard for one whom I always did, and ever shall esteem as a most valuable friend.

With this assurance, which does yet but faintly express the feelings of my heart, permit me to subscribe myself,

My dear Friend,
Most truly and faithfully yours,
RICHARD HILL.

Would that the author of this excellent remonstrance, had always written against error in the same tone, and in the same clear and satisfactory mode of treating his subjects. To what he said on the topics of "Freewill and of Merit" in this letter, he added the following note, which shews that his Calvinistic views were, after all, not so very *high*, to employ the phrase in common use on these points; but *wherefore* it is so applied, they who invented it ought to have explained. "Though," says Mr. Hill, "we deny man's *freewill*, yet we deny not that every man *acts freely*, both in a state of nature, and in a state of grace. In the former, he can only follow that corrupt bias, which all the faculties of his soul have contracted by the Fall. In the latter, his understanding being enlightened to know the things which belong to his peace, he *freely* chooses the good, and refuses the evil. So that, as an eminent prelate observes, 'though God uses an infinite power in the conversion of a soul, yet he uses no compulsion.'" I apprehend very few pious Wesleyans would refuse to admit this position of their worthy antagonist. In fact, the nearer we approach this excellent individual, the more we shall find how different a person he really was, from what he sometimes appeared in the dust of con-

troversy, or in the flash and smoke of his too frequent discharges of wit and sarcasm. He is no just biographer who conceals the mistakes of those whose histories he may write ; but it is an equal, nay a superior act of justice, to give their due prominence to the piety, sincerity, and charity of any Christian character he may undertake to pourtray.

CHAPTER XI .

MR. RICHARD HILL ELECTED M.P. FOR SHROPSHIRE. VIEWS WITH WHICH HE ENTERED PARLIAMENT. THE PLEASURE HIS ELECTION GAVE TO THE REVIVALISTS. HIS FIRST SPEECH IN FAVOUR OF THE LORD'S DAY BILL. HIS QUOTATIONS FROM SCRIPTURE. HIS HUMOUR. REMARKS IN THE PUBLIC ADVERTISER. MR. HILL'S APPEALS TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. HIS SPEECHES ON VARIOUS IMPORTANT QUESTIONS. "THE SKY-ROCKET," WITH SIR JAMES WRIGHT'S REMARKS. TESTIMONY TO MR. HILL'S CHARACTER, BY A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. HIS PUBLIC OPPOSITION TO THE FOLLIES OF AN OLD FRIEND.

MR. HILL ENTERS PARLIAMENT.

IN the autumn of 1780, Mr. Richard Hill was returned, without opposition, to Parliament for his native county. In the House of Commons, he avowed his motto to be *Pro Christo et Patriâ*, and always desired to conduct himself, in the strictest sense of the expression, as a Christian senator. No man was ever more thoroughly divested of all fear of the ridicule of the world; and if at times he unnecessarily exposed himself to it, he acted upon an honest principle, and with a view to prove that religion was falsely accused of generating moroseness and gloom. This was the real cause of his occasionally giving vent to a flow of natural humour, which it would often have been more prudent to have restrained, espe-

cially at those times when he allowed it to mingle with discussions of the most serious importance. Fidelity compels his biographer to acknowledge these failings ; but the same fidelity to his better qualities, enables him to assert that a more thoroughly honest representative was never sent from any county to Parliament. Though his reputation as a man of an enthusiastic turn in matters of religion, caused him to enter upon public life the object of innumerable prejudices, he no sooner made his appearance in the highest walks of society, than his gentlemanlike manners, courteous deportment, and perfect good humour, attracted the regard of many who had formed no real notion of his true character, and were surprised to find in his actual presence, a person so different from their previous ideas of him. He adopted a style of living suitable to his station in life, and his table had all the characteristics of the most refined and generous hospitality, admirably tempered with the exemplary moderation belonging to his profession of religion. The revivalists of his day hailed his election with the sincerest joy, for they knew that neither the fascinations of courtly society, nor hope of the honours and emoluments of place, nor the notice of the great, would induce him to deviate in the slightest degree, from those principles which the grace of God had rooted in his heart. Congratulations from those whom he had supported in many trials for their work's sake, came to him from all quarters, a specimen of which shall be given in a letter from the famous Jonathan Scott, one of the most extraordinary itinerants of his times, and the devoted coadjutor of Whitfield.

Buxton, the 7th Oct. 1780.

DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

Not hearing of the day fixed for the county meeting to nominate their representatives till it was over, and being, without considering of it, engaged to preach many miles from home on the day of election, I was prevented hereby from attending at either; which notwithstanding I am convinced of the insignificancy of my presence and influence upon such occasions, yet I should have done, to testify my sincere respect to you, and willingness to serve you with my little ability whenever in my power.

But as there was not even the least shadow of an opposition, I was convinced your kindness would excuse the mere useless *punctilio*, when you knew my reasons.

Since that time, absence from home, and almost constant employment in travelling and preaching, have hindered me from either personally or by letter, paying my congratulatory respects to you. Therefore I humbly hope you will condescend to accept my late but hearty congratulations, on the honourable trust reposed in you by your God and your county. Though I may be last in offering this my poor token of respect to you, I cannot believe one was before hand with me, in offering up my prayers and supplications to God on your behalf. I acknowledge myself quite unacquainted with the present polite mode of complimenting on such occasions, and were I ever so well versed in it, I could not but believe, as the Christian is more becoming my character, so it will be more acceptable to you.

When I look back to times past, and call to mind those happy seasons when you have condescended to take sweet counsel with me about the great things that

belonged to our peace, and how we might spread far and near the sweet savour of Jesus's precious and balmy name, and exhort poor lost sinners to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure ; and how happy you were when you saw or heard of but one precious soul being plucked by the arm of mercy as a brand out of the burning ; and when I reflect, and I hope I shall praise God for it to eternity, how oft you have quickened and animated me to my Christian and ministerial work and warfare, by your suitable exhortations, and exemplary zeal and piety—yea, when I remember how oft I have seen you stand up as an ambassador of Christ, and boldly declare the whole counsel of God, not fearing the faces, nor courting the favour of sinful men, but nobly bearing testimony in God's name against the accursed thing, Sin, and by the light of truth, detecting and laying open the detestable and destructive nature of it, however specious its outward forms and pretences may be, and insisting on the absolute necessity of being delivered from its guilt and power by faith in Jesus Christ, and that men must not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of their minds, in order to their being Christians here, or [having] the hope of heaven hereafter :—Lastly, when I hear frequently the poor serious people in the parish, &c., and my dear wife tell of past good days, and how many blessings they have received from your spiritual and godly conversation—for oft the Lord has hearkened and heard you exalt his name together, and testified his divine approbation by his Spirit in their hearts, and making the place you were in none other than a Bethel to their souls—I say, when these and many more such things crowd in upon my mind, I cannot but believe my mode of congratulation must be more acceptable than a fulsome

compliment, however fashionably it may be dressed. Therefore I adopt it, and beg you will believe that none more sincerely wishes you all joy in the Lord, on the high honour He in his good providence has conferred on you. I say, that He has conferred, because I am persuaded you see and acknowledge His all-ruling hand in it, and consider yourself His steward in the present great and important trust reposed in you.

Remember, dear Sir, how it is written, not many rich, mighty, and noble are chosen and called of God. But you are one of the few who have found favour in his sight, and obtained singular mercy at his hands, and for this very end, that feeling your infinite obligations to Him, you may devote yourself and all your talents and influence to His glory. May God ever help you to esteem it the only glory of all your honours, to live to His praise.

When with a humble heart and single eye, much fervent prayer for wisdom from above, and a truly Christian walk before God and man, you do all things, what may you not effect for God and your country?

When I call to mind what blessings a single-handed Noah, Job, Daniel, Abraham, Joseph, Phinehas, &c., have been made through God in their days to the sinful lands they lived in, I have a hope that at this moment warms my heart, that God has in mercy for some such a happy purpose raised you up in our sad day and sinful land, and given you rank, and riches, abilities, and influence, and grace, and put you into Parliament, that you might have the honour of standing in the gap, and by your Christian example, wisdom, and counsel, and fervent prayer, turn away that wrath which is already gone forth, and has consumed many, and so be an instrument in His hands of saving a guilty land from ruin;

and you well know there is none but the Scriptural plan that can be adopted with any hope of the divine approbation and blessing. I am persuaded the eyes of many are upon you, and the prayers of many offered up daily on your behalf. May you, then, dear Sir, do all in the name of the Lord, and the Lord be with and abundantly strengthen and bless you. But should you move, which God forbid, not single-eyed to his glory, and not walk before the Lord with a perfect heart, but turn aside with the multitude to do evil, you will be a curse and not a blessing in the land. If David sins, more wrath comes down on Israel. So, if you warp from the law of your God, and sin against him, it will be with us. Hell and the wicked may rejoice, but the hearts of the redeemed will be made sad indeed. Though I thus write, I hope better things concerning you, and shall not forget you at the throne of grace.

Believing that as long as you esteem yourself honoured as the friend of God, you will be the sincere friend of His friends and servants, I therefore lay this hasty serawl, which I have not time to correct or write anew, without further apology at your feet for acceptance, and hope you will cast the mantle of Christian love over all the uncouth expressions, improprieties, the liberty I take, and every blot and fault, and receive it as it really is, a token of heartfelt and grateful respect from

Your much obliged,

Though most unworthy servant,

JONATHAN SCOTT.

His old friend, Mr. Hallward, whom he defended at Reading and presented to a small benefice, wrote to him thus :—

“I sincerely congratulate you on your late election to represent the county of Salop in Parliament, which agreeable news I have seen announced in the public prints, though I have yet received no private advice of it. * * * * * I trust in God, dear Sir, and pray our Lord Jesus Christ, that both our advancements¹ may be eventually for the advancement of his glory, and the good of our fellow creatures, and then neither we nor others shall have any cause to complain, but much for praise and thanksgiving to the God of our mercies. * * * * * I trust I shall never forget your manifold and repeated kindnesses. The memorial of them can only perish—if then—with my existencce. Accept, dear Sir, the small tribute of my tears, which flow freely whilst I write, at the recollection of past times, and our former friendship—a friendship which I hope will not be interrupted by distance of place or time, and which, I trust, shall yet outlive time itself and survive the world.”

Such congratulations as these from the honoured instruments of good, whose ready defender and friend he had always been, were truly dear to Mr. Hill, and encouraged him in his resolve to enter upon his public duties, with a full confession of the opinions he had espoused in a more private sphere. Though he burnt package after package, and heap upon heap of his general correspondence, he preserved these letters with the utmost care, as communications over which he had probably wept and prayed, as he sought, in secret, grace and power from on high to be true to his Master's cause, in scenes where a quotation from his word excited a sneer, and the mention of his name was considered un-

¹ Mr. Hallward had recently obtained preferment, and proposed to resign the living Mr. Hill gave him in consequence.

pardonably *Methodistical*. Great indeed were the ignorance and irreligion of the fashionable circles at that time; though even then, there existed distinguished exceptions.

In considering Mr. Hill's course as a Member of the House of Commons, we must bear in mind the extraordinary difficulties he had to contend with. Besides the prevalent animosity of the times against all that was then called *Methodism*, or even an approximation to it, he had to encounter a prejudice against himself of long standing, on account of his widely circulated, and not always judicious, publications in defence of views branded with this hated name. And it was a name then indiscriminately given to all that tended to make men acquainted with the gospel of Christ, and included all the zealous clergy and pious non-conformists in a censure, the meaning of which those who cast it at them, as little comprehended as they did the geology of the moon. Fearless of all reproach, and trusting to guidance from on high, Mr. Hill entered the great world in the metropolis, and was preserved from the evil, though he performed his due part in society.

When he rose to speak for the first time in the House of Commons, where ingenuity, wit, and oratory were engaged on almost every other subject than the one nearest his heart, he chose a most appropriate occasion. He began with vindicating the honour due to the Lord's day, a bill for the better regulation of which was submitted to Parliament, May 19, 1781. "The principle and tendency of this measure, Sir," he said, "I hold to be highly deserving the encouragement of this House. Six days are enough for pleasure and the world, and the seventh ought to be devoted to divine and solemn purposes; for without a due regard to religion, we can nei-

ther expect political nor domestic happiness in the land. Governments in former periods were so sensible of this, that they used to appropriate one day of the six on which they sat, to the discussion of matters of religion. But now not even the Sabbath is passed in a proper manner, but it is become the principal day for paying and receiving visits, and is even spent by some in gambling or travelling." "For every reason," he said in conclusion, "I shall give the bill my support in all its stages."

Such a commencement was worthy of a sincere advocate for truth, and of one who knew that a Christian nation can never expect prosperity, while God is forgotten and his sacred day prostituted to secular purposes. His manner was serious, and such as became the gravity of the subject, and his plain declarations of duty were unanswerable. In many respects his speaking partook of the character of the addresses in other places, of his brother Rowland, particularly in his impromptu utterance of well-turned aphorisms. For example, on Mr. Fox's motion respecting Lord Sandwich's mismanagement of the navy, he exclaimed with some warmth, "I profess myself to be a supporter of government, but I do not pledge myself to defend bad governors, since constitutional government can only be supported as governors act wisely and uprightly; but when governors become the overturners of government, it is high time such governors themselves should be overturned." In the same speech he also said, "I hope that no member of this honourable House will so far do violence to his real sentiments on this occasion, as to say,

Video meliora proboque,

Deteriora sequor,

—to pay, in fact, more attention to the smiles of the

Minister than to the groans of the nation." We have an instance of his keenness and humour, in the curious conclusion to which he came respecting Mr. Fox's motion just mentioned, and in his droll manner of expressing it. After premising that he had noticed all the arguments in the spirit of the lines,

In moderation placing all my glory,
Whilst Tories call me Whig, and Whigs a Tory,

and had given those on both sides their due weight, he must, he said, come to this decision, "That our naval affairs had been neither well nor ill managed, consequently that they must have been conducted in a very *middling, indifferent, so so way*; and that surely it could reflect no dishonour on the great council of the nation, to beseech his Majesty to displace the person who had proved himself to be this *so so, middling, indifferent* manager." The amusement of the House was extreme, and Mr. Fox shook him afterwards warmly by the hand, delighted at the new turn given to the debate by a thoroughly independent county Member; for such he pointedly declared himself to be. He said also, that however poor his judgment might be, he hoped "when-ever he ceased to vote as he thought right, his constituents would think it right to vote him out of the House of Commons."

In his Parliamentary speeches, he was frequently in the habit of referring to the authority of the Scriptures. His quotations were not, however, always equally well selected. The House generally laughed at all allusions he made to the Bible, but on one occasion he retorted so forcibly, that all present seemed struck with his observations. "The House laughs," he exclaimed, "at my quotations from Scripture, but I hope it is unnecessary

to apologize for mentioning a book now so obsolete as the Bible ! I fear that old-fashioned volume takes up but very little time and attention of this honourable House : permit me to say, I cannot help wishing it took up more. If we were to settle our differences in the spirit which it inculcates, our debates would be much shorter than they are. For instance, with regard to the case of our American captives being dieted as rebels, and not as prisoners of war, if St. Paul had been suffered to determine the question, his principles would have thus decided, " if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink." But, alas, though we have frequent appeals to other laws, we have seldom any appeals to the law of God." No laughter followed these remarks ; their truth came home to the conscience.

The Public Advertiser of March 22, 1782, made the following observations, when giving an account of his speech on Sir John Rous's motion for the removal of the ministry. " Mr. Hill seems to be a good man. He spoke with much wit and good humour, in answer to several preceding speakers ; and he is quite right in observing a facetious manner in these times of pleasantry and dissipation. Because, by keeping gentlemen in good humour, he may every now and then catch an opportunity of giving them a word in season, when he sees them pleased and attentive. A grave and solemn manner is certainly best suited to religious affairs ; but the House of Commons in its present state, would think Mr. Hill savoured too much of the enthusiasm of the last century, if he were to lay aside that pleasing variety of manner of which he seems so eminently possessed. Mr. Hill judged well in recommending the House and the English nation to return to Jehovah ; and it is to be hoped, notwithstanding all the jokes and sneers at

Mr. Hill's conduct, that he will be enabled to persevere in the right line of his duty to God and man." Such remarks do infinite credit to the press from which they issued. Such a tone of temperate firmness becomes all *religious* periodicals. Christian editors must remember what the world will say of the light of these days, if it has the appearance of generating acidity of thought and expression. The sunshine which ripens and sweetens the grapes, changes bad wine into vinegar. But to return to Mr. Hill. Well indeed did he speak as a Christian senator at the time alluded to. "If," he said with much energy, "I shall not be called to order, and be told that it savours too much of the cant and enthusiasm of the last century, I will say, let us look to Him who alone can teach his senators wisdom, that he would be pleased to raise up able and faithful men—men fearing God and hating covetousness, to preside at the helm of Government. If any credit is to be given to the sacred volume, we may there see that in proportion as nations served God, or cast off their allegiance to him, they either prospered or miscarried in their public affairs. Therefore, I am not ashamed to say—may it be my motto, may it be that of every member—*Pro Christo et Patriâ*—but if we still pursue corrupt measures, if we still do wickedly, though not assuming to be a prophet myself, I will further add in the words of the prophet Samuel, "*we shall soon be destroyed, both we and our king.*" When Mr. Hill uttered these honest and pious observations, he declared the grounds of them to be, that "he saw the nation arrived at a very important crisis, burdened by accumulated taxes on all the necessities of life, weighed down by an immense debt, torn by intestine divisions and discontents, and surrounded by powerful enemies." Nor was this descrip-

tion overcharged. It was an awful period. The country had been at war with her colonies in North America, and with France, Spain, and Holland, without the advantage of the alliance of one earthly power to help in the overwhelming contest. In the midst of these embarrassments, the nation was still further threatened by Russia, Denmark, and Sweden, who together with Holland had formed treaties with each other, constituting what was called "the armed neutrality," understood to be directed chiefly against Great Britain. Nor was the aspect of affairs in Europe more terrible than in India, where the native powers, under the influence of France, had manifested a disposition which menaced our expulsion from our Eastern possessions, and created a well-founded alarm for their security. To this appalling combination of evils was added a most gloomy state of things at home. A damp had been cast over the spirits of the bravest in the land, by the failure of our naval and military operations, while the burdens of war had caused a most ominous diminution of public credit, accompanied by a fearful decrease in the value of land. But this was not all—the revenue declined, and all classes of society began to fear that our resources were nearly exhausted and our ruin approaching. In his views of this unexampled crisis, Mr. Hill entirely agreed with Mr. Pitt, who entered Parliament only a few months after him, and whose youthful eloquence had surprised and delighted the House. With him he concurred in denouncing the government of Lord North, and in condemning the incapacity of Lord Sandwich. Mr. Pitt inveighed against those ministers who "by their fatal system had led the country, step by step, to the most calamitous and disgraceful situation to which a once-flourishing and glorious empire could possibly be driven

—a situation which threatened the final dissolution of the empire, if not prevented by timely, wise, and vigorous efforts.” Such was the language of this young and gifted statesman, who added to the majesty of his father’s manner, a brilliancy of genius peculiarly his own, and notwithstanding the inexperience of little more than boyhood, manifested a wisdom and foresight scarcely equalled by the oldest and most talented of his fellow-legislators. At that time he fully concurred with Mr. Fox in his endeavours to turn out an administration, whose mode of conducting the business of the country seemed to have endangered its very existence. The history of that period, and the characters of the eminent men to whom it gave birth, are too well known to need any illustration in this narrative; but one thing seems to have escaped the worldly sagacity of them all—the necessity of remembering that our security is placed in the recollection that we are a *Christian* community. If, more than half a century past, the management of our colonies in the western hemisphere had been in accordance with all that is implied in this sacred appellation, they would probably have gloried to remote ages in our possessing them. The trying days now recurring to the memory, ought to teach us a lesson of present colonial duty, and to cause us to honor such patriots as Mr. Hill, who have reminded our men in power from time to time, that a nation’s best safeguard is placed in a constant recognition of the providence, and obedience to the revealed precepts of the Power Supreme of heaven—in not looking in times of danger and dismay to the cunning policy of man, but to our simple Christian duty, and the goodness of God. These were truths which Mr. Hill never lost an opportunity of declaring in his place in Parliament; and if he was sometimes wanting

in the felicity of choice expression, happy quotation, and chastened wit, they are failings which will be freely overlooked by those who can appreciate the boldness of his piety, and the way in which he bore the ridicule of the world. The cloud which then seemed ready to burst upon Great Britain, melted at length into a day of memorable glory; but let others attribute this to what they may of human skill, there are men who will not fail to believe that it was in favour to "the holy seed" then spreading in the nation, that judgments were removed and blessings came, and who will not cease to regard piety in the people and their rulers as the surest omens of future prosperity.

The debates in which Mr. Richard Hill took the part just described, were on those momentous topics that afforded such a noble field for the display of the genius, sagacity, and eloquence of Mr. Pitt, and invested his early dawn with the radiance of a mid-day of surpassing splendour. Subjects of higher importance have seldom come before Parliament. They included the vital interests of the country—its war with America, the conduct of the Board of Admiralty, the decay of our internal prosperity, our want of foreign alliances, and the utter incapacity of the Government. In his view of these serious matters of debate, Mr. Hill coincided in opinion with Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, and united cordially with them in condemning Lord North's administration, declaring he would not consent to prop up "a tottering ministry at the expence of a tottering nation." He saw "the nation arrived at a very important crisis, burdened by accumulated taxes on all the necessities of life, weighed down by an immense debt, torn by intestine divisions and discontents, surrounded by powerful enemies,—in short, more than on the brink of ruin." Therefore,

“ though he had some very particular friends amongst those in office, and would have been glad to have seen a happy coalition between them and able men on the other side, yet he was persuaded that they whose imbecility had rendered their best-meant plans abortive, ought to be removed from the helm of affairs.” These were the sentiments he expressed in his speech upon Sir John Rous’s celebrated motion,¹ when he also called upon the House and the country to return to God. The part he selected was a reply to Sir James Marriot, then Judge of the Admiralty, who made a pompous harangue in which he talked about “ his feelings as an Englishman,” and used the expression “ building houses *ready made* !” Mr. Hill, after amusing the House with his remarks on this *Irishism* from an *Englishman*, declared that he felt

¹ The terms of this motion were, “ That this House, taking into their consideration the many grievous calamities that have attended this war ; considering that upwards of one hundred millions had been voted for it under the different heads of the army, navy, and ordnance ; and that, notwithstanding, thirteen provinces had been lost in America, together with the newly-acquired province of West Florida, the islands of Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent, and Tobago in the West Indies, and Minorca in Europe — that we were at war with France, Spain, and Holland, without a single ally to support us ; and that danger surrounded us on all sides : this House can no longer repose confidence in those who have the management and direction of public affairs.” There arose a long debate, which Lord North concluded by a very temperate speech, in the course of which he declared that he should be happy to see a coalition of parties, on the broadest basis, and wished that the ablest, best, and most powerful men would join, without any party views, to meet the exigencies of the nation. For himself, conscious of the rectitude of his intentions, if the fate of the division were against him, he would not shrink from, but demand an inquiry into his conduct. The House divided at one o’clock in the morning, and the numbers were, —For the motion 229.—Against it 238—giving ministers a majority of 9.

some little wavering about his vote, but had been riveted by Sir James's arguments, in an opinion the direct contrary to that which was designed to be confirmed by them. He then gave a hint about forming a coalition, in which Lord North afterwards acquiesced, and concluded with a pious and manly appeal to his fellow-legislators, to acknowledge the power and providence of God, and to look to Him for the deliverance of their country from its evils and dangers. A newspaper of the day says, "thirty-one members spoke on Sir John Rous's motion, and yet there were only three of all these thirty-one gentlemen, who touched at all upon the grand points that are now ripe and fit for the immediate consideration of the people's servants in the House of Commons. Those three members were Mr. Harrison, Mr. Charteris, and Mr. Hill, all very respectable characters; and from their plain, open, artless manner in this debate, they do not seem to be muzzled by the leaders of parties on either side of the House." Mr. Hill had told Lord North some time before, that if his Lordship and the question of war with America were put in the same scale, he would find himself, notwithstanding his *ponderous* influence, soon "kicking the beam." Mr. Pitt spoke on this occasion with prodigious animation and warmth, confessing his agitation, and declaring the cause of it to be, that he "felt for his country in the mortifying distress of being governed by men who had neither sensibility nor shame," and that he was convinced the success of Sir John Rous's motion was the only means of presenting to the world a spectacle, the idea of which he had contemplated with rapture, though he almost despaired of seeing it—that of "a patriot king presiding over a united people." The motion, however, as is well known, was lost; and Mr. Fox, foresee-

ing the issue, gave notice while the division was taking place, that a similar motion would be made on the following Wednesday. In the mean while the ministry went out ; but at the time announced, Lord Surrey rose to make the promised motion. Lord North stood up in his place at the same instant, and neither being willing to give way, the house quickly became a scene of clamour and confusion. But at length Lord North obtained permission to speak. He at once declared that he and his colleagues had ceased to be His Majesty's ministers, and thus prevented another debate and division. A few days after, Lord Rockingham formed a new administration, including Mr. Fox ; but Lord Thurlow remained on the woolsack. Mr. Pitt was offered, through Lord Shelburne, a vice-treasurership in Ireland, an office once held by the great Lord Chatham, his father, but proudly declined it, having determined never to accept any office which did not give him a seat in the cabinet, nor to pledge himself to measures in the framing of which he had not been consulted.

In all the debates of this important session, Mr. Hill, whenever he spoke, assumed a tone of perfect independence, and generally came to clear and sensible conclusions, that produced considerable effect. For instance, when Alderman Sawbridge, after the failure of Mr. Pitt's celebrated effort in the cause of reform, proposed to shorten the duration of Parliaments, he shewed much ability in the way in which he commented on the speech of Mr. Fox, and the inference he drew from it. Mr. Fox declared that " he was certain it was the wish of the people that such a measure should be carried ; and added, that it was the fatality of this kingdom never to open her eyes until her ruin was near, and there was a fear of every man taking up a musket." After this

hasty observation, he continued to this effect, "I shall vote for the present motion, because I believe it to be the wish of the people, although I am *doubtful* as to its tendency and *fearful* as to its effects." This language on the part of Mr. Fox, was censured by Mr. Powys and Mr. Burke. The latter, however, having addressed the House, as he said, three hours on the same subject shortly before, contented himself with a strong denial of the assumption that it was the wish of the people, and a few words of caution, against such a desire, as ruinous to the happiness of the community. Mr. Hill then rose, and gave vent for a few moments to his singular humour, and declared that if he spoke more than five minutes, he would knock himself down, as was done at the Robin Hood Club; and that though he was a Salopian, he did not mean to combat the motion for an hour by the House of Commons' clock, or Shrewsbury clock. But he next gave Mr. Fox a blow he did not easily recover. "An expression," he said, "fell from the Right Honourable Secretary at the beginning of the debate, which determined me to give my vote against the motion, notwithstanding that same Right Honourable Gentleman declared he meant to vote for it. His words were, that 'he was *doubtful* as to the tendency of the motion, and *fearful* as to its effects.' Now, after such a declaration from a person of so much judgment and eloquence, I must certainly put a negative on the motion; for if the Right Honourable Secretary expresses his *doubts* and *fears* as to the consequences, surely I can never give my voice for a *doubtful* measure, especially when that measure is to sap the very foundation of the constitution itself." He then proceeded to express his surprize that Mr. Fox could support a motion, when he was *doubtful* of its being a *good* one, and *fearful* lest it should turn out a

bad one, and concluded with some excellent observations on the tendency of short Parliaments to deprive Members of the advantage of becoming qualified for their duties by experience, and the Speaker himself from presiding over their sittings. In short it was his opinion, that the proposition would go not to *reform* but to *deform* the constitution. The motion was lost by a majority of 88, the numbers being, against it 149, for it 61.

In the debate on the recal of Admiral Rodney, Mr. Hill amused the House by accusing Lord North of sacrificing to Somnus, and declared that the Noble Lord went to sleep while Members were speaking, and then woke and misrepresented them. He had also an opportunity of speaking his sentiments with regard to the state of places of amusement, when the question of the Turnpike Tax was brought before the House. Mr. Hill's constituents, as well as himself, being much opposed to this tax, he thought it his duty to give his opinion against it. A Right Honourable Gentleman, he said, had observed that the Ministry were obliged to drink out the dregs of that bitter cup which had been left them by their predecessors. Bitter, however as the cup was, they had endeavoured to sweeten it by giving up the tax on public diversions, proposed by the previous government, because it was unpopular. "But," asked Mr. Hill, "in whose eyes would it be unpopular? Perhaps in the eyes of dissipated people, but not in the eyes of wise and thinking men; and therefore almost every Christian nation, except our own, taxes playhouses and other public diversions." He observed, "It is very hard that honest and poor families must be taxed over and over again for every bit of salt they use, for every morsel of candle they burn, for every bit of soap they wash with, for every drop of beer they

drink, and yet the nurseries of vice and idleness must pay nothing at all to the exigencies of the State. I am not against the people having *proper* recreations, but the extravagance attending public diversions is got to such a height, that it calls for the wisdom of the Legislature to lay some check upon it." In confirmation of this opinion he instanced the case of a masquerade, fresh in the memory of many members, where the subscribers had paid forty guineas each! He alluded likewise to the enormous sums which had been cleared by a celebrated female dancer. For his part, he thought it time to press for a tax on such amusements rather than on the necessities of every day life. He then diverted the House by telling them he had lately heard a large party of senators gravely discussing for a long time, whether the dancing lady's foot looked best in a shoe or a slipper—but for himself, having seen her in neither, he could give no opinion.

Such was the course pursued by Mr. Hill in the House of Commons till the prorogation of Parliament on the eleventh of July, 1782, after which he took a journey into the north that occupied him till the end of August, when he joined his family at Hawkstone. Jealousies had arisen in the Cabinet, among men who had only been united by the common object of removing Lord North, and whom all the influence of Lord Rockingham could scarcely hold together. At his death, therefore, which happened on the first of July, and on the appointment of Lord Shelburne in his stead, Mr. Fox and Lord John Cavendish resigned. The former avowed in the House, that the cause of his resignation was the difference of opinion that existed between him and certain individuals in his Majesty's councils. It was on this occasion that Mr. Pitt opened his severe battery of ani-

misadversion on the conduct of his powerful rival, and the ambitious personal motives, which he felt convinced, from his own admission of pique on the appointment of Lord Shelburne, had caused him to make a division, where he should have promoted union for the great object of his country's welfare. On the formation of Lord Shelburne's Cabinet, Mr. Pitt became Chancellor of the Exchequer, though only a youth of twenty-three, and soon after the prorogation of Parliament took place.

As may be supposed, the religious sentiments avowed by Mr. Hill in the House of Commons excited considerable notice. To the various remarks such a fearless expression of his opinions called forth, were added many on a singular pamphlet¹ called "The Sky-Rocket," of which the motto and matter at once convinced every person that he was the author, although it appeared without his name. The motto was *Amica Patria, amicus Rex, magis amicus Christus*, and the matter a review of recent events and questions, in a style which by its correspondence with that of his speeches, at once proclaimed it to have come from his pen. He submitted this production to the perusal of Sir James Wright, and received it again, with the remarks of that experienced politician² and friend of the celebrated Marquis of Bute. The copy of the pamphlet, with Sir James Wright's observations on the margin, in his own hand-writing, is still in existence. It was chiefly directed against the administration of Lord North, and Sir James wrote at

¹ Published during the Easter recess of 1782.

² Sir James Wright was the person who commenced the fruitless negotiation with Dr. Addington, respecting a ministerial union between Lords Bute and Chatham. It was the first political affair which brought Mr. Pitt into notice before he entered Parliament. See Tomline's Life of Pitt, vol. 1, p. 25.

the end of it, "I think this little, spirited, humorous, but truly Christian tract, a complete clinching of the nail with regard to the catastrophe of the late blunderers in administration." As a specimen of its humour may be taken Mr. Hill's remark on Lord Nugent's defence of Lord Sandwich, the drift of which was to prove that misfortune, and not mismanagement, was the cause of ill success in our naval affairs. Among other things in vindication of this First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Nugent said, "How should the Earl of Sandwich know which course the French fleet would take, since he is *neither saint nor angel*?" On this Mr. Hill observed, "if ever pure, uncorrupt truth dropt from the compliant bench on which the Noble Lord then sat," it was contained in those words, and if the question had been put simply, "It is the opinion of this House that the First Lord of the Admiralty is *neither a saint nor an angel*," it would have passed without a division. He could not refrain also from an allusion to Lord North's drowsy propensities during debates. Though he declared few members paid stricter regard to the debates than himself, yet, said he, "I must confess that once or twice, not being accustomed to midnight hours, I caught myself snoring a harmonious duet with a certain Noble Lord in a blue ribbon; though it appeared in the division afterwards, that we were not quite so much in concert when we were awake as when we were asleep, and that if our noses were at perfect unison, our voices were at absolute discord."

But one of the principal subjects of this *brochure*, was the mode of taxation proposed to supply the deficiencies of the revenue. Mr. Hill was a great enemy to the design of taxing goods and merchandize sent by land or water, and agreed with Mr. Fox, that it would be a tax

upon the only free trade at that time left to the people. He also ridiculed the idea once entertained, of taxing maid-servants, but advised to tax all livings¹ and benefices above a certain value, all deans, chapters, bishoprics, and "all idle, non-resident clergy." Also prints exposed to sale, all who needlessly travelled on the Sabbath, as well as all gaming-houses; and "doubly and trebly those murderers of peace, health, time, and credit, cards and dice." Likewise *friseurs*, and every plate run for at Newmarket, or at other races, with snuff and perfumery of all sorts. "In short," said he, "tax the vices, follies, and luxuries of mankind to the utmost; but spare trade and commerce, spare industry, and as much as possible, spare the poor." But he next proceeded to enlarge on his favourite scheme for taxing playhouses and public diversions, which he supported in the following terms." *First*, waving the evil and corrupt tendency of the stage, and the dreadful evils done by it to the morals of thousands, no one is compelled to pay a farthing a year to this tax; so that it is entirely a voluntary tax. *Secondly*, it takes no more from any individual than what he himself judges he can very well spare, nay, it actually takes nothing but what is deemed superfluous after all the conveniences of life are supplied. *Thirdly*, it neither affects the poor, nor trade, nor any of the necessaries of life. *Fourthly*, if it decreases the number of players, and of such as exhibit at different places of diversion (which I much doubt), it may be the happy means of making those seek to get a livelihood in a useful, creditable way, who now live as drones upon the public. Upon the whole, if we except all those who

¹ Sir James Wright's remark on this is, "A plan for this I some years ago proposed to the Administration, and sent them a scale to act upon."

are in some degree or other interested to exclaim against this tax, and those who had rather spend their time and money at playhouses, &c., than employ them to any better purposes, I hope I may safely say there is not a man of sound sense and of a real benevolent disposition to be met with, but upon calmly weighing the arguments, will acquiesce in the propriety, usefulness, and even expediency of this tax on public diversions, which I trust will be extended throughout England, as well as the metropolis."

"What a scandal would it have been even to heathen Rome, what a demonstration of the decay of her glory, what an evidence of the corruption of her manners, what direful proof that all attention to the public welfare was absorbed by luxury and effeminacy, if the great business of the Senate had ever been postponed or stood still, in order that the senators themselves might attend at the theatre to see some foreigner cut capers, and pay their tribute of money and praise to his excellences. Yet was not this actually done last year at the time of Monsieur Vestris's benefit? Blush England! Blush Christian Protestant!

————— Pudet hæc opprobria nobis
Et dici potuisse, et non potuisse refelli.

"Mr. Burke, with a proper tincture of wit, satire, and manly courage, mentioned the above circumstance in the House of Commons at the time. But the name of *The Vestris* was too dear to be thus brought up with impunity, for the next day, ignorance and impudence joined their united forces to ridicule Mr. Burke in some of the public papers."

"Is it not then time, high time, that these sort of places should be taxed towards the exigencies of the

state, when, notwithstanding the empire is crumbling into ruins, we are so lost to all feeling of our own, and to the miseries of our fellow-creatures, that we can annually pay as much to the support of French and Italian singers and dancers, whether *the this*, or *the that*, or *the other*, as would relieve thousands of poor, sick, industrious families, who are destitute of all the necessities of life ; and as would fit out several ships of the line for the public service.” The note of Sir James Wright on these observations was, “ Before I had read the above very forcible arguments for the taxation of the theatres, it seemed to me a hardship to render the recreations of the public less attainable ; but I am now convinced it would be right to tax them.”

Mr. Hill concluded his tract with a serious address to the two first of the three classes into which, he said, Parliament, and indeed all society was divided. “ *First* ; those who pay no credit at all to Christianity ; *secondly*, those who give their assent to the truth of Christianity, and yet live in direct opposition to it ; *thirdly*, those who both believe and practise Christianity.” In addressing the second of these classes in the House of Commons, Mr. Hill commended the laudable custom of commencing business with prayer, but complained that the solemn duty was deserted by all but the speaker. “ Insomuch,” he declared, “ that if a member came to the door of the House during the time of prayer, he was generally accosted with ‘ Sir,’ or ‘ My Lord, the speaker is going to prayers,’ or, ‘ the speaker is *at* prayers ;’ and the answer generally returned by his Lordship or the honourable gentleman was, ‘ Very well, Mr. Pearson,¹ then I will walk about a little till prayers are over.’ ” “ Of a day

¹ The doorkeeper, I presume.

indeed," he added, "in which some interesting debate is expected, perhaps forty or fifty members are assembled before, and whilst the Church service is reading. And what are they assembled for? To write their names and take their places. And what is going on whilst we are supposed to be entreating the divine blessing on our endeavours, that 'peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, may be established among us?' Every thing but *praying*. One reading a petition, another a bill, a third a report, a fourth whispering to his neighbour, &c." On this Sir James Wright remarked, "True and well observed." Mr. Hill further stated that he found from the journals, that at no great distance from this time there was an order of the House, that if any member was not at prayers, he should forfeit one shilling. This, Sir James Wright called "a good hint for a small taxation, which might either increase the revenue, or improve morality and religion." After adding a few more things, in the same style of honest rebuke of the carelessness respecting religion, which marked the career of the great men of those days, Mr. Hill said, "But among all our crying national sins, I must not omit to mention particularly our dreadful profanation of the Lord's day." He declared it to be the day in which of all others in our Christian nation, God was most signally dishonoured. His words are, "I may venture to affirm there is more idle visiting, unnecessary travelling, gluttonous feasting, and trifling dissipation on that day, than on all the other six days of the week; not to mention that there is now a public newspaper printed and hawked about every Sunday morning, and that machines, diligences, &c. are openly and constantly advertised to set out on that day." The little tract then concluded with a serious and faithful warning.

This was the character of the "Sky-Rocket," which certainly contains a mournful picture of many of the evils of the day in which it was written, and a faithful testimony against them, although every friend of Mr. Richard Hill will be free to confess that there were some things in it which had been better omitted.¹ The whole course of Mr. Hill's public life naturally drew down upon him the unsparing censure of those whose vices he attacked, and of all who, though they knew not why, were enemies to *Methodism*. It seemed indeed to be the opinion of the age that any thing was preferable to *that*: in short, as it was once said by a lady of fashion, that "surely it was better to *sin a little*, than to be so *very good*!" Yet even they who disapproved Mr. Hill's religion, were obliged to give their testimony to his irreproachable character and the high integrity of his motives. A distinguished member of Parliament who knew him well, could find nothing to "disapprove in his conduct," except "his introducing religion, or quoting Scripture in some of his speeches." To this declaration that gentleman added, "In every other respect, I think Mr. Hill's conduct is, and has been, that of an upright, conscientious member of Parliament, who is biassed by no party, and who wishes always to act as he judges right. Nor do I know any one member of the House who thinks otherwise of him. In this point of view, Mr. Hill has my sincere esteem and approbation, and I hope ever to live in friendship with him, and to give him every support in my power." A more decided proof of the worth of Mr. Hill can scarcely be needed than that which is contained in these words.

¹ Mr. Hill thought so himself after its publication, and with his usual candour acknowledged it in print.

Such indeed was his character, and it commanded, in spite of the prevailing prejudice against religion, that homage which the most reluctant were obliged to award to one whose actions were based upon sincerity and truth.

While the important events narrated in this chapter were proceeding, Mr. Hill had the painful duty to perform of becoming the public opponent of an old friend. The absurd work of the Rev. Mr. Madan called “*Thelypthora*, or a Treatise on Female Ruin,” was the cause of this trial. He was a man much beloved by Mr. Hill, who, before he exposed the follies of his notions on polygamy, remonstrated with him in the most affectionate terms, against printing a book which would cast a perpetual shade over the author’s reputation, and be most injurious to the cause of religion. His advice was not attended to, and the silly work came out. These pages shall not contain a single quotation from such a production. Mr. Hill thought it was incumbent on him to oppose the opinions it asserted, and I shall have sufficiently performed my duty as a biographer, in giving an extract from a review of his refutation of Mr. Madan. “Amongst the most respectable opponents of *Thelypthora*,” says the Monthly Review, “is the ingenious and worthy author of the present work.¹ We have read this address with pleasure and satisfaction. The argumentative part is, in general, solid and judicious, and the lighter part is entertaining and sprightly. The language, though not remarkable for its elegance, is easy and perspicuous; and the knowledge displayed in it, though

¹ Entitled “The Blessings of Polygamy, displayed, in an affectionate address to the Rev. Mr. Madan, occasioned by his late work, entitled, *Thelypthora*.”

not extensive, is accurate; but its chief praise is founded in the *spirit* with which it is conducted. We see the zeal of the Christian embellished with the politeness of the gentleman, and the poignancy of criticism softened by the affection of friendship." This was a true description of the work of Mr. Hill; but the subject is one to which no reader will desire more than this brief allusion.

CHAPTER XII.

DECEMBER, 1782. MEETING OF PARLIAMENT. LAST PRIVATE INTERVIEW BETWEEN MR. PITT AND MR. FOX. SPEECH FROM THE THRONE. DISCREPANCY BETWEEN LORD SHELBURNE AND HIS COLLEAGUES. LORD NORTH AND MR. FOX OPPOSE THE TERMS OF PEACE. SYMPTOMS OF THE COALITION. SPEECH OF MR. HILL. RESIGNATION OF THE MINISTRY. DIFFICULTY OF FORMING A NEW ADMINISTRATION. MR. COKE'S MOTION. AMENDMENT OF MR. RICHARD HILL. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE COALITION MINISTRY. OBSERVATIONS OF MR. HILL. HIS FIRM PIETY. AN EXCELLENT LETTER TO A CLERGYMAN. DEATH OF SIR ROWLAND HILL. SENTIMENTS WITH WHICH MR. RICHARD HILL SUCCEEDED TO HIS TITLE AND PROPERTY.

THE SHORT RECESS, 1782.

THE prorogation of Parliament continued only from the 11th of July to the 5th of December, 1782. During the short recess, Mr. Pitt had for the first time entered upon his official cares as a minister of this great empire, and young as he was, he had sagacity enough to foresee that a battery would be opened at the commencement of the session on his party, before which it would not, without reinforcements, have strength enough to stand. But he did not choose to augment his forces by seeking an accommodation with "the drowsy lord in the blue ribbon,"¹ who, had he always slept, would have escaped

¹ Lord North, so called by Mr. Hill.

the sting of some of Mr. Pitt's most brilliant early denunciations. Both Lord Shelburne and his young but able colleague, desired the assistance of Mr. Fox ; and the latter actually called on him with the offer of office. This overture Mr. Fox rejected, unless Lord Shelburne was removed from the helm of affairs ; " for," said he, " I am determined not to belong to any administration of which Lord Shelburne is the head." " If that," replied his highminded visitor, " is your determination, it is useless for me to enter into any discussion—for *I am not come to betray Lord Shelburne.*" He then left the room, never more to have a private interview with his illustrious rival, but to become his stern opposer. But in this, as in all the transactions of his opening day of power, Mr. Pitt gave evidence of the " virtue, integrity, and honor" ascribed to him by Mr. Burke, which formed a brighter wreath around his brow, than all the brilliancy of his eloquence, or the splendour of his genius.

Parliament opened with a speech from the throne full of topics of vital interest to Great Britain,—namely, pacific negotiations with America, France, and all the belligerent powers of Europe by whom we had been menaced. The address was, on this occasion, carried unanimously, both in the Lords and Commons ; but on the report being brought into the latter house, Mr. Burke indulged his humour to the full, and by his violent abuse of the speech and sarcastic observations, kept the benches in convulsions of laughter. The House, which had been carried away by the irresistible powers of the ill-timed wit of this extraordinary man, was quickly brought into a more serious mood by the memorable rebukes of Mr. Pitt, who spoke in a manner more suited to the solemn and weighty topics then engaging atten-

tion, and whose speech was hailed with such general applause, that the report was received without any division. But the ministry were soon placed in a very singular situation, by contradictory statements relative to the independence of the American colonies. Lord Shelburne asserted that the recognition of that independence was contingent upon peace with France, whereas upon a question being put by Mr. Fox in consequence of this affirmation, Mr. Pitt and two of his colleagues replied in the lower House, that it was intended to be unconditional. Upon this declaration, Lord Shelburne became the subject of many severe remarks in several debates, and was accused of intending to deceive both his colleagues and the public. Mr. Burke called the ministry a serpent with two heads; and in every possible way did Mr. Fox and his party endeavour to bring the character of Lord Shelburne into suspicion and contempt. But the house having negatived¹ Mr. Fox's motion for the production of the provisional articles, agreed upon between the English and American commissioners, there was no other important debate before Christmas. Never did the interior of the House of Commons present a spectacle of deeper interest, than when the young, but gigantic powers of Mr. Pitt were almost nightly developed in his contests with the united forces of Burke, Fox, and Sheridan, whose combined eloquence, experience, and wit, falling harmless on the shield of his mighty genius, were hurled back upon them with dart after dart still keener of his own.

I do not find that Mr. Hill took any prominent part in these debates at the close of the year 1782; but in the beginning of the new year, he was early in the field.

¹ The motion was rejected by 219 to 46.

Preliminary articles of peace with France and Spain were signed at Paris on the 20th of January, copies of which, as well as of the provisional articles with America, were produced before both Houses. Time, however, was wisely given to reflect on the terms of these treaties before they were made subjects of debate, and during the interval, Mr. Pitt passed his economical measures with the approval of a unanimous House of Commons, and great credit to himself. But as the hour approached for the stirring question of the treaties, which it was evident must end either in confirming or uprooting the Ministry, every eye was fixed in anxious expectation upon two leading individuals, Lord North and Mr. Fox, who had a common interest in the overthrow of the Government, and who were never likely to find again such an opportunity for effecting it. Accordingly, by the intervention of common friends, they were easily brought to agree that they would unite in deprecating the terms of peace. The adroitness with which they commenced their attack is well known, as well as their caution in not coming to a direct censure of the treaties till they had felt their way. At length, on the 20th of February, they thought it was time to strike a grand blow in the shape of a string of five resolutions moved by Lord John Cavendish. This Nobleman took great pains to assure the House, that neither he nor his friends had the remotest design of shaking those treaties which had been made by the King's prerogative. However, in the fourth resolution, which gave rise to a very animated debate, he moved "that the concessions made to the adversaries of Great Britain were greater than they were entitled to." One of the most forcible opponents to this censure was Mr. Powys, afterwards Lord Lilford, who had at that time great weight in the House of

Commons. From what Mr. Fox said in the course of his reply to Mr. Powys, the coalition between Lord North and himself became sufficiently apparent, so that Mr. Pitt observed upon it, "If the baneful alliance is not already formed, if this ill-omened marriage is not already solemnized, I know a just and lawful impediment, and in the name of public safety I here forbid the banns." The reply of Lord North was more temperate than might have been expected, considering that he had been the object of the vehement thunder of Mr. Pitt; but he claimed a favourable judgment from the House, upon the ground of his listening to all that had been said without dismay. Yet he confessed the misfortunes and ill-consequences of his ministry, which had in former debates made him the butt of Mr. Fox. Nevertheless, he was ready to forget all former animosities, that in the present emergency he might combine for his country's good with the man who had for many years "vilified and abused" him.

The last speaker on this occasion was Mr. Hill. When he rose, there was a loud call for him, and he obtained a very attentive hearing to the end. He apologized for introducing himself at so very late an hour, and promised to be brief out of compassion to the House, and especially to the Speaker, "for whether," said he, "I or others are the *borers*, you, Mr. Speaker, are the *boree general* of this august and honourable assembly." Having by this humorous remark, enlivened a little the exhausted listeners to the long speeches of that important night, he proceeded to observe with much shrewdness, that there were two classes of men who censured the peace. From one of these he said he would borrow an argument in its favour, taken from their own mouths, "Peace at all events, peace upon any terms,

was to be preferred to this destructive, this unnatural war." Yet now a peace was obtained, and as good a one as, considering the circumstances of the times, could have been expected, they who had voted one ministry out for protracting the war, were trying to throw out another for making peace! But, as to the second set of men who censured the peace, "let me," he observed, "ask these gentlemen, *who* brought the nation into so dishonourable a situation as to make such a peace necessary? If they are sincere in their answers, the blame they cast on the peace will light on themselves!" He next declared his opinion to be favourable to the peace, and that nothing else could save the empire from ruin; therefore he called on every independent son of peace to say by his vote, *pax bello potior*. But as to the coalition he had heard of that night, he reprobated it in the most ironical terms, and declared that the coming together of Lord North and Mr. Fox would, like the meeting of an acid and an alkali, cause only a violent fermentation, which would destroy them both. It put him in mind of the union between Herod and Pontius Pilate—however, lest he should launch out, he would say no more, but sit down in silent wonder. As soon as he ended, the division took place, and the numbers were, ayes 207, noes 190, making a majority of 17 against Ministers. For some time, Lord North hesitated about voting for the fourth resolution; but finding that his desire to form a coalition would be unavailing if he did not, he yielded, though he had not as yet had any personal communication with Mr. Fox, so long his bitter and unsparing foe, but now about to become his *convenient* colleague. The person who had most influence over Lord North on this famous occasion was Mr. Eden, afterwards Lord Auckland, who was called "the father of the coalition."

After this defeat, the Ministers declared that they should give up their offices as soon as their successors were appointed. But the King was most reluctant to sanction the strange confederacy, between two men whom Mr. Hill so appropriately called "the acid and the alkali." For twelve years his Majesty had regarded the Noble Lord with confidence and favour, but had held Mr. Fox in great dis-esteem; and now, if they were made joint ministers, it was clear that his decided superiority of talent would leave Lord North little or no influence. The characters of both had also suffered in the eyes of the country, from their readiness to form a junction so unnatural and inconsistent, whereby all public principle had been violated, and all confidence in them destroyed. In this strange state of things, Mr. Pitt was invited by the King to become First Lord of the Treasury. The House adjourned on the motion of Mr. Dundas for three days, to give him time to consider his Royal Master's proposal; but Mr. Pitt, feeling that he could not carry on the government in the face of the new coalition, declined the honourable offer, lest he should involve his Majesty in difficulties without being able to benefit the nation. Such was this young statesman's high sense of honour, that he could resist the most dazzling prospects of a personal kind for the sake of the public weal. He gave a striking proof of this noble disposition in proceeding at once, unmoved by his late important decision, to his bill for the Reform of the Customs.

Great difficulties, as might be expected, impeded the formation of the new government. The King would fain have had Lord North accept the office of Prime Minister, but having already entered into an agreement with Mr. Fox to give the lead to the Duke of Portland,

he declined the offer. Although his Majesty at length acquiesced in their engagements, and commissioned them to form an administration, embarrassments multiplied on all sides, and the want of a government was loudly complained of in Parliament. At length, on the 18th of March, Mr. Coke,¹ then Member for Norfolk, gave notice that if the Ministry was not formed in three days from that time, he should move an address to the King on the subject. On the 21st he announced that he should not make his motion, because he had heard that arrangements were nearly completed. On the 24th, in consequence of fresh impediments, he moved the address to his Majesty, which was seconded by Lord Surrey. Bishop Tomline, in his *Life of Mr. Pitt*, says, "When notice was first given of this motion, a Member, who disapproved the coalition, signified his intention of adding a clause as an amendment, requesting his Majesty not to appoint any person a minister, who, "by his mismanagement of public affairs, and by want of foresight and ability, when in office, had lost the confidence of the people"—words taken from a motion of Mr. Fox against Lord North when head of the Treasury. This "Member" was Mr. Richard Hill.² When he rose to propose the amendment, the Speaker told him it was not regular, as no motion was before the House, but the calls of "read, read," were so vehement, that he was permitted to go on. He did not, however, press his amendment on the day of the debate on Mr. Coke's motion, as the wording of it sufficiently embodied his views; but he embraced the opportunity to eulogize in the highest terms the abilities and integrity of

¹ Now Earl of Leicester.

² It may perhaps hereafter appear *why* Bishop Tomline did not choose to mention his name.

Mr. Pitt, and to express his sorrow that he was not likely to form part of the government, and his hope that the public would be "rescued from a most disgraceful and unnatural coalition." He had learned, he said, a mournful lesson since he had sat in that House, that no man seemed to be fit to be a leader in opposition, who "would not sacrifice the service of his country in order to get rid of a minister who stood in his own way." After this severe remark on certain politicians of his time, he concluded by declaring how sincerely he desired to see ability combined with honesty, the distinguishing characteristic of the new arrangement. The motion was agreed to, and a gracious answer returned by the King. Nevertheless, by reason of perpetual impediments, the second of April arrived before the announcement of the coalition ministry took place. There was not in the whole body of members, an individual more averse to this singular union than Mr. Hill, who never lost an opportunity of ridiculing it. On one occasion he exclaimed, "O, what a wonderful power is there in that great national crucible called the Treasury, to melt down and dissolve animosities and heterogeneous qualities, and to make them coalesce! But the present happy coalition has produced wonders indeed! Notwithstanding all their former discordant opinions, they have cordially joined hand in hand to condemn a peace which had saved the kingdom, and to get rid of a Ministry guilty of no national crime, but that of standing in their way." Of Mr. Pitt he said at the same time, "There is more disinterested public virtue in him, than in any other man in office." When the question of reform in the Pay Office was under discussion, he expressed his astonishment at the spectacle of two persons, "who lately durst not trust themselves together in

the same room, now cordially embracing each other!"¹ He begged also to assure the loving pair, that if they agreed to the end of the year, they should have his vote for the *flitch of bacon*!

Mr. Hill was a frequent speaker throughout the whole course of this interesting session, and took a very active part in the discussions on the Composition Malt Bill, in which, as a country gentleman, he felt he had a peculiar duty to perform. He sincerely acted on the principle "of voting according to the dictates of his conscience, and being influenced by truth and argument, rather than by party connection." His speeches were generally made towards the end of a debate, and his honest comments upon the various arguments of the evening, mingled with a peculiar playfulness of manner, caused him generally to be heard with eagerness even by fatigued Houses. They also knew he would not have been put down; for he was utterly devoid of the fear of man, and unmoved by ridicule when he believed himself to be right, qualities in which his brother Rowland strongly participated. The prorogation of Parliament took place on the 16th of July, when Mr. Hill retired from the busy scene to the duties and enjoyments of the country.

Mr. Hill's piety was much too deeply rooted, to be shaken in the agitations of the political world. During the pressing public business of the session just adverted to, he thus wrote to a clergyman whose management of a parish in which he was much interested, fell far short of his ideas of ministerial efficiency. "Believe me, I join with you in lamenting the lukewarmness among professors in our county; but in every censure, I cast the first stone at myself, and pray to the Giver of all

¹ Lord North and Mr. Fox.

grace to quicken and strengthen me. Particularly do I grieve and mourn for the Church of Christ in and about —, when I reflect with a painful pleasure on many happy days and sabbaths spent among a lively, simple-hearted people in the days of those faithful gospel ministers Mr. —, Mr. —, and Mr. —. How, alas! is the fine gold now become dim!—the congregation diminished,—the communion almost deserted,—the sheep of Christ scattered, and no others gathered into his fold in their stead. Complaints from every quarter, and all that reciprocal love and harmony which should subsist between pastor and flock, almost totally extinguished. When you consider the relation I stand in towards these people, surely you cannot blame me for thus pouring out my heart on their behalf, especially as I fear that the disgust and prejudice which are taken up, both by the children of God and the children of this world, are so great, that there is, without a wonderful interposition of grace, a total bar to your future usefulness. However, I know that with God all things are possible, but still means are to be used. You will pardon me therefore, if I tell you with the sincerity of a friend, that I really think you had better not attempt *extempore* preaching. Many who wish you well, have expressed the same sentiment, but a point of delicacy has perhaps prevented their mentioning it to you. However, as I myself have heard you say that where a person has not gifts for *extempore* sermons, he had better write them, I conclude you are no bigot in favour of *extempore* preaching; and as others are certainly better judges than ourselves of our talents, I trust you will take in good part what I have said on this head. Another matter which I must mention with equal freedom is, that in your preaching you insist too much on out-

ward things, without holding forth those rich displays of the work, love, and power of Christ, which alone can comfort the guilty sinner's heart, and cause him to run in the way of God's commandments. In vain shall we look for the image of Christ in the life, where faith in Christ is not planted and cherished in the heart. Think not that I would offer the smallest plea in behalf of sin—God forbid; but by losing sight of those distinctions in this world, which infinite wisdom has established for the good of the whole, and adopting a levelling principle, we fall into a narrow, contracted way of thinking, and often puff ourselves up with spiritual pride under the idea that we are rebuking sin in others, when in truth and reality we are fostering the monster ourselves, by giving way to a spirit of censoriousness and uncharitableness, as illiberal and mean in itself, as it is diametrically opposite to the temper and genius of the gospel of Christ. In no station of life, that which is evil in itself can be right, yet still that may be highly improper and even sinful in one, which in another may be absolute duty; but in all these things, judgment and discretion, under divine grace, must direct us according to our situations and connections in life. The excellent Mr. Hervey, in his eleven letters to Mr. Wesley, has some most judicious observations on these points which are well worth the perusal of every Christian. In what I have written, I trust that a single eye to God's glory, friendship to you, and love to the people of——, have guided my pen, and therefore my prayer is, that the Lord's blessing may accompany it."

This letter is replete with piety and prudence, and contains much that is well worthy of the consideration of Christian ministers.

In the autumn of this year, Mr. Richard Hill sue-

ceeded to the title and estates of his father Sir Rowland, who died on the 7th of August. Scarcely was the funeral over, before he thus expressed himself in a letter written to one who had condoled with him, "I can with singleness of heart appeal to the God of all grace, that my sincere desire and earnest prayer is, that I may be found faithful in every sphere wherein I am called to move ; and I trust I shall ever be enabled to take his blessed word for my guide, and his Holy Spirit for my director." Imbued from earthly youth with such sentiments of true piety, Sir Richard Hill came into possession of his patrimony with an antidote to the snares and temptations of the world, which proved to him a happy defence against them all, and conducted him safely and honourably to the end.

CHAPTER XIII.

NOVEMBER 1783. MEETING OF PARLIAMENT. EAST INDIA AFFAIRS. MR. FOX'S BILL. SIR RICHARD HILL'S SPEECH ON THE SECOND READING. HIS SPEECH ON THE THIRD READING. IT PASSES THE COMMONS. ITS REJECTION BY THE LORDS. DISMISSAL OF THE MINISTRY. MR. PITT PRIME MINISTER. CHARACTERISTICS OF SIR R. HILL. DIFFICULTIES OF MR. PITT. MR. DUNCOMBE PRESENTS THE YORKSHIRE PETITION FOR REFORM. SPEECH OF SIR RICHARD HILL. MOTION OF LORD C. SPENCER. COMMITTEE ON THE STATE OF THE NATION. SIR RICHARD HILL'S STORY OF MR. WHIGHOUSE AND MR. TORYMAN.

MEETING OF PARLIAMENT, NOV., 1783.

ON the 11th of November 1783, Parliament reassembled, when the speech from the throne announced the conclusion of definitive treaties of peace with France, Spain, and America: it also stated that the situation of the East India company and the necessity of providing for the revenue, were the principle reasons of the early period of meeting. The first remarkable sign of the session, was the agreement between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox respecting the address. Some reciprocal courtesies passed between them, although the former observed that the vote in which they were agreed, was a panegyric upon the late ministry with reference to the very points on which they had been previously blamed. Shortly

after the meeting of Parliament, Mr. Fox brought in his far-famed India Bill. Originally, the East India Company was composed of two consolidated bodies, the first established in 1600, the second in 1698, and united in 1708. It carried on as a society of merchants, with certain privileges framed for the purpose, an important trade in those distant regions of the globe. But in process of time, an extraordinary series of unforeseen circumstances threw into their hands a vast extent of territory and an immense revenue, whereby they became invested with a political sovereignty over the dependent princes of the East, and that in connection with their commercial affairs. At length, as might be expected where the temptations were so strong, abuses arose which threatened at once the reputation of Great Britain, and the safe tenure of her Indian possessions. Various legislative enactments were passed to meet this mournful state of things, but were found insufficient to effect their objects; so that at length it appeared plain to all parties, that if some effectual remedy were not speedily applied, the East India Company must be ruined, and the British settlements in the East entirely lost to the nation.

It was on the 18th of November, that Mr. Fox opened to the House of Commons his proposals relative to India, commencing his speech with a statement of the strong necessity which existed for a thorough change in the entire management of our eastern territories. He then proposed to form a Board of seven commissioners in London, with eight assistants; and declared that the object of the first of his two bills, was to settle and secure all matters relating to their powers, agency, removal, and the mode in which they should submit their proceedings to Parliament. The second bill was to be for

preventing ambitious projects for the extension of our Indian possessions, for securing to landholders due enjoyment and inheritance of their property, and for the hindrance of various abuses well-known to all acquainted with the history of proceedings in the East Indies. As soon as Mr. Fox had developed these intended measures, the plea for which, with all their difficulties and dangers, he declared to be necessity, Mr. Pitt in a most able speech pointed out the objections he saw to them at a cursory glance, prayed for time to consider, and said that necessity was too often the argument of tyrants and the creed of slaves. He also shewed the immense power and patronage the minister would gain by nominating the commissioners—that in fact he would be governor of India, and obtain the very things for himself which his bills professed to eradicate.

The first bill was read a second time on November the 27th. Mr. Pitt requested further delay that there might be a call of the House, but Mr. Fox refused to agree to it, and leave was given to bring in both bills. The call of the House was, on the motion of Mr. Pitt, fixed for December 3.

Sir Richard Hill spoke upon this occasion with much originality and humour. He began with saying that the appearance of all objects depended much upon the light in which they were viewed, and pointed out the wonderful difference in the Right Honourable Gentleman's vision, when he saw through the medium of the opposition instead of the Treasury benches. Had such a bill been brought in when he sat upon the former, it would have appeared to him in very different colours from those in which he had depicted it, as well as of different form and dimensions. The Right Honourable Gentleman would, if in opposition, have looked at it

through two glasses he always carried about with him: he meant his *magnifying glass* and his *multiplying glass*. The magnifying glass would have exhibited to an alarming degree, the great danger of increasing the influence of the Crown, and the power of its ministers, which he used to describe as awful monsters to terrify his present *cara sposa*,¹ before they were united by their present *matrimonial* ties. His multiplying glass would have shewn him innumerable evils arising out of the bill, which it now seemed to him calculated to prevent; and thousands more of rapine, injustice, cruelty, and violation of rights, charters, Parliamentary faith, &c., which would have danced before his astonished eyes like so many spectres, at one and the same time. But now he used his optical instruments on that illustrious bench, and saw things only in a *North East* light, it was wonderful how different their effects were. The magnifying glass shewed him his own aggrandizement, and the extension of his influence as a Minister of State, till his power and strength seemed so great, that he felt as if he could really carry the whole India House on his own shoulders.² Then how charmingly did it expand his seven commissioners, and their eight assistant directors, into splendid supporters of himself and his friends, changing them from little Lilliputians into mighty sons of Brobdignag or Patagonia! How also did the other glass multiply friends and jobbers, who would follow him wheresoever he pleased to lead them; and how charmingly did it multiply all his own interests, his connections, his powers, not only at home in this country, but by sea and land all over the globe! And again,

¹ Lord North.

² Sir Richard Hill made this remark in allusion to a caricature, which represented Mr. Fox with the India House on his back.

how did it multiply—the choicest of all its effects—the rupees and the guineas, if not to the nation, yet to the lucky favourites who were to taste of the sweets of the Bill for five whole years to come!

Sir Richard Hill next proceeded to make a few general remarks on the Bill itself, leaving certain particular parts and clauses to be discussed by those who, he conceived, were more equal to such a task than himself. He declared, however, that he considered the principle and spirit of the measure to be decidedly opposed to the whole genius of the British constitution, and to those just and benign laws on which it is based. He said that the Directors of the Company were hardly allowed the privilege of felons, the seizure and confiscation of whose property never took place till after conviction. In this case the Directors were not even accused, much less convicted of any specific crime.

After these observations, he gave his opinion that the choice of executive officers in the way proposed, was clearly unconstitutional, and that the tendency of the whole measure was to give the minister patronage, while it relieved him from responsibility. He also adverted to certain charges of corrupt dealing on the part of those most concerned in the Bill, but which he did not dwell on as they were not yet proved. He laid great stress on the important resolution of the City of London, which had decided in Common Council to petition the House against the measure. Moreover, he deprecated the sudden manner in which Members had been summoned by the ministerial messengers, to give their votes on such an important question without any time for consideration; and thus, he said, was to be determined the annihilation of an ancient charter; thus did the Government trifle with the characters of individuals, and

resolve upon the seizure of their goods and property¹—in short, thus did they determine the very fate “of Cæsar and of Rome!”

Powerful as was the eloquence which was directed by the ablest debaters of the day, against this momentous proposition of Mr. Fox, none more clearly pointed out its dangerous tendency than this humorous yet argumentative speech of Sir Richard Hill. This bill was the rash attempt of a daring politician, enjoying at that time neither favour at Court nor popularity in the country, to acquire and maintain an enormous power in defiance both of the Sovereign and the people. It was denounced by Mr. Pitt as “one of the boldest, most unprecedented, most desperate, and most alarming attempts at the exercise of tyranny, which ever disgraced the annals of this or any other country.” Mr. Powys expressed his high respect for the talents of Mr. Fox, but condemned his plan as rash, despotic, dangerous to the Constitution, and calculated to make him, what he never ought to be, the master instead of the servant of his King.

The third reading was proposed on Monday, Dec. 8, when Sir Richard Hill again entreated the indulgence of the House, while he once more briefly protested against it; for he should always remember with satisfaction that he had opposed it as long as he was able. He considered that the measure gave a vital stab to the Constitution, and when he recollected who gave the wound, he was ready to exclaim, *et tu, Brute!* His conduct brought to mind that of Joab to Amasa, when he took him by the beard with one hand, and with the other thrust a

¹ It was during these debates that the Attorney General, Lee, used the unguarded expression, “*A charter is nothing more than a piece of parchment with a bit of wax dangling to it.*” This observation produced upon the country the effect it well deserved.

dagger into his heart, while Amasa was not aware of the weapon in Joab's hand. He hoped he should be pardoned for the allusion to the Scriptures, and only wished the House might become better acquainted with them both in theory and practice. It was not his pleasure to bring severe accusations, but he appealed to every Member who heard him, whether if such a Bill had been brought in by any administration to which the Right Honourable Secretary was opposed, he would not long before this time have been calling out for impeachments, axes, and halters, and whether he would not have made Westminster Hall, Covent Garden, the Shakspeare Tavern, and above all, the walls of that House, ring and echo with the dangers of that power wherewith he was now about to invest himself and his colleagues? He would offer him a motto, if he might venture to do so to one who by this Bill would have the whole patronage of the East at his command, and be greater than all the Oriental Nabobs put together. It was this: *Non sum qualis eram*; he was Ajax and Ulysses united.

Since nature could no further go,
To make a third, she joined the other two.

“Should the Right Honourable Gentleman now lose the name of the *Man of the People*, he might be consoled with the reflection that his Directors and their *subs* might be called *The People of the Man*.” After this sally, he went on to remark that the Bill professed to be framed “for the benefit” of the public. This was part of its title, but between that and the Bill itself, there had been abundantly shewn to exist an irreeconcilable variance, so that they could never *coalesce*; though as great contrarieties in nature had certainly, as Honourable Gentlemen knew, formed a *coalition*. In order to shew

his opinion of the Bill he should propose, if it passed, that it be printed with the following amended title:—
“ A Bill for most unjustly, violently, and forcibly wresting the affairs of the East India Company out of the hands of the present twenty-four Directors, and for placing them in the hands of certain new Directors and their *subs.* Also for strengthening the influence of his Majesty’s present Ministers, and for clearing the way for the total abolition of several useless charters yet existing in this kingdom ; and for affording a speedy provision for several respectable friends, jobbers, and adherents of his Majesty’s present Ministers, which friends, jobbers, and adherents are now labouring under most necessitous circumstances, and are very importunate to be relieved.”

Thus wittily did Sir Richard Hill describe the tendency of Mr. Fox’s measure, which, notwithstanding all the exposure made of its consequences, passed the Lower House of Parliament by a majority of 208 to 102. The circumstances which brought about this division, were the large parties which adhered to Mr. Fox and Lord North respectively, with an attachment not only political but personal, and the conviction that if the plan were adopted, the present Ministers, possessed of the patronage of India, would stand their ground against any force which could be applied to remove them. Such also was the popular opinion of the *liberal* author of the measure, that the mass of society was slow to believe that he would use his influence as “ champion of the British constitution, and guardian of the people’s rights,” to create a novel tyranny for the sake of aggrandizing his own power and that of his fellow ministers. The unusual character also of the Bill, and the rapidity with which, in spite of every remonstrance, it was hurried

through its stages in the House of Commons, left little time for the public to give an opinion, or indeed to form any, before it came up to the Lords. It is evident that this was the case, from the fact that while the Bill was in progress through the Commons, only two petitions,¹ besides those of the proprietors and directors of the East India Company, were presented against it, though it subsequently became so unpopular.

On the 9th of December, Mr. Fox carried his Bill up to the House of Lords with an air of great triumph. He was surrounded by a large concourse of his supporters, who tried to give all possible *eclat* to their recent victory. The Upper House, however, so often the preserver of the constitution and the best rights of the people, proved on this, as on many other occasions, how much it is entitled to the highest regards of the State. As will shortly appear, it saw through the Bill, and rejected it. Scarcely had it crossed the threshold of the House of Lords, before Lord Thurlow, with bent and clouded brow, and fiery eye, denounced it in his hoarsest tones, as “a most atrocious violation of private property, a daring invasion of chartered rights, and a direct subversion of the first principles of the British government, for the purpose of establishing upon groundless pretences, an enormous and unconstitutional influence in the hands of the present Minister.” And again he observed, “I wish to see the crown great and respectable; but if the present Bill should pass, *it will no longer be worthy of a man of honour to wear.*” As he pronounced these last words, he looked full upon the

¹ One from the City of London, and the other from High Wycombe, the latter of which was not presented till the Bill, brought in on Nov. 8, and read a third time on Dec. 3, had actually passed the House of Commons.

Prince of Wales,¹ who was present, and then added, "The King will, in fact, take the diadem from his own head, and place it on the head of Mr. Fox." At length numerous bodies enjoying charters, conceiving them to be endangered by this attempt to destroy the charter of the East India Company, were aroused, and began to petition. The City of London petition was presented on the 15th of December, the day fixed for hearing counsel and the second reading. An objection was made to some parts of it by the Duke of Manchester, when the Duke of Richmond observed, that they were worded after a protest against an India Bill of 1773, signed by the Duke of Portland and other peers, now supporters of Mr. Fox's measure, which silenced all further objections. A similar allusion to this celebrated protest had, also been made by Sir Richard Hill in the House of Commons.

The ministry made the same attempt to hurry the bill through the upper, that they had done through the lower House, opposing every request that was made for more time, even for a day; but on the 15th of December the Lords having heard counsel, decided on adjourning to the next day, by a majority of 87 to 79. During the debate on the question of this short adjournment, moved by the Duke of Chandos, a curious scene took place. The Duke of Portland mentioned a rumour that Lord Temple had been admitted to an audience with the King,² and that his majesty had authorized him to state his royal displeasure at the plans of Mr. Fox. This the duke asserted, if true, was an unconstitutional attempt

¹ The Prince was favourable to the Bill.

² This audience was afterwards, as is well known, made matter of debate in the House of Commons.

to influence votes. Lord Temple in reply made no secret of his reported audience, but contended that in offering his Majesty what advice he thought right, he had only exercised the unquestionable privilege of a peer of the realm. That advice he had given; he did not choose to say what it was until his Majesty, in whose breast it was lodged, was graciously pleased to allow him to divulge it. Yet he would frankly tell their Lordships, that the advice he had offered to his Sovereign was not friendly to the bill. This led to a warm altercation; but in carrying the adjournment, the opposition Lords gave the first check to the impetuosity of the Government. The Prince of Wales voted on this occasion with the friends of Mr. Fox, but on the final rejection of the measure his Royal Highness did not vote at all. It was refused to be committed on the 17th after a long debate, and subsequently negatived without any division. On the evening of the 18th, the King dismissed his ministers, desiring them to send in their seals of office by the under-secretaries of state. Mr. Pitt now became first minister of Great Britain. Lord Temple had taken office, and wrote the letters of dismissal to the members of the late cabinet; but on account of the clamour raised against him respecting the audience just alluded to, and the use of the King's name, he was obliged immediately to resign, that he might not have the shield of place as a protection against any charge he might be called upon to answer. This affair so affected Mr. Pitt, that it deprived him of the sleep which nothing else, while he was in health, was ever known to disturb. When he entered upon this arduous career, he was only in the twenty-fifth year of his age, yet he was found after many a struggle, to have strength at once to defeat the powerful and experienced talent which opposed him,

and to uphold by the single force of his giant arm, the weight of a tottering nation.

During the debates on the India Bill, the House always heard Sir Richard Hill with interest, and often called for him. His rising was a signal for the cessation of all bitterness. He was one of those open-hearted cheerful Christians, whose smile brought all companies into the pleasant mood; and whether he addressed the House of Commons, or the less formidable assembly of a meeting of country gentlemen in his own county town, while he was speaking, gloom and ill temper fled away. He was liked by all classes of persons; for he had always some good-natured speech ready for every one, the effect of which was greatly increased by his well-known honesty, and his very gentlemanlike address. I heard an aged and most respectable magistrate of Shropshire say, "We thought nothing of any public meeting, at Shrewsbury, if Sir Richard Hill was not there, and were all on the look-out for him till he came; and when he arrived, there was such shaking of hands, and so much pleasant talk, that every one was in good humour." All this, mingled as it was with the truest piety, caused even those who sneered at his religion to say of him, "he is a good and agreeable man." But besides these qualities, which always made the House of Commons willing to listen to him, he possessed the art of laying open in the most original manner, the weak parts of the arguments of those from whom he differed, which added to the conviction of every man who heard him, that his words expressed the honest opinion of his heart, made it natural he should be attended to. No man exposed with more acuteness and wit, the absurdity of the coalition between Lord North and Mr. Fox, the issue of which he foresaw from the

first moment it was announced. The quotations from Scripture which were so much objected to, were given by him to shew that he believed Christianity to be the firmest pillar of the state, and the Bible the surest guide to national prosperity, happiness and order. At times, however, his religious zeal and constitutional vivacity carried him too far ; but the instant he perceived his error, he at once avowed it with almost unequalled candour. Yet when he saw that it was his religion alone that gave offence, he defended himself with admirable power and boldness, and did not scruple to tell the wealthiest and most talented of his fellow-senators, that without a knowledge of the way of truth, their riches were poverty and their acquirements vanity. Such was the plainness of speech he allowed himself on these occasions, that he startled even his pious friend Mr. Wilberforce ; yet when we review the days in which he lived, we cannot but admire the character of a man whose society was courted, as his was, by the very persons whom he did not hesitate for an instant, to warn of their faults in the plainest possible language.

I do not find, upon Mr. Pitt's first accepting the situation of Prime Minister, that Sir Richard Hill took his usual part in the debates. He seems rather to have watched his opening movements with anxious silence. The wonderful firmness, however, of this extraordinary statesman in that convulsion of the political elements, which would have irrecoverably cast down any ordinary human being, won his admiration and support. When the helm of Government was first placed in his youthful hand, he had to guide his course through rocks and quicksands, which on all sides threatened a certain and speedy shipwreck. He was embarrassed by the confusion of the affairs of India, on which the opinion of the

House of Commons was pledged against that of the Lords, and his own ; he was called upon to check the innumerable frauds by which the revenue was injured, and to devise means for augmenting a deficient and inadequate public income, while he maintained public credit and contrived means for reducing the national debt ; and in the midst of cares like these, he had to listen to the outcries of unquiet Ireland, the vociferous claims of American loyalists, and threatening whispers of severance from foreign allies. Appalling as was this prospect, the waves of danger swelled as he approached them ; yet, in the midst of all, he carried himself with a coolness, magnanimity and disinterestedness, that surprised his opponents, delighted his friends, and won for him the gratitude of his sovereign and country, together with the admiration of the whole civilized world.

The history of that eventful struggle has been too often narrated to need repetition here. The rejection of Mr. Pitt's India Bill, the addresses to the throne, the manœuvres of the opposition, the adverse demonstration on the part of the Prince of Wales, the accusations of secret influence, the hostile decisions of parliamentary majorities, are well known to the world. The first occasion during this remarkable contest, on which I find any memorandum of a speech of Sir Richard Hill amongst his papers, was when Mr. Duncombe presented his petition from the county of York for a more equal representation of the people in Parliament.¹ Mr. Pitt manifested on that day the most consistent adherence to his former views of the question of reform ; but Lord Surry chose the opportunity to attack him violently on the point of secret influence, whereby alone he avowed the

¹ January 17, 1784.

first minister had been brought into office. His Lordship acknowledged that his eminent qualifications fitted him for the high station he had been called upon to fill, but he deprecated as unconstitutional the means by which it had been assumed. The object of Lord Surry was evident, but he was foiled by the dexterity and honesty of Mr. Pitt. Even Mr. Fox made a very quiet speech on the occasion, acknowledging the force of some of his great adversary's remarks, particularly those in which he stated the impracticability of forming a cabinet of one opinion on the question of reform. It was on this night that Sir Richard Hill rose to rebuke the opposition on a very tender point, which will be best understood by giving the substance of what he said. He did not enter upon the topic of reform, as he conceived the time for that was not come. What called him up, was the accusation of secret influence, of which so much had been advanced that he needed not to repeat any part of it. But he begged to ask, while honourable gentlemen were complaining of secret influence over the House of Lords, whether there was no danger of any over their House? Then he proceeded, "If, Sir, the unhappy period should ever arrive, when an heir apparent to the crown should be seen within those walls, either directly or indirectly attempting to influence the votes of members, either by words or otherwise, would the House of Commons brook such a sight? Would they not think their honour was sullied, their independence tarnished, their privileges invaded?" The question thus put produced no slight sensation. Sir Richard also made a happy allusion to the name facetiously given to the House of Lords by some speaker the same evening, who called it the *House of Correction*; and certainly in many difficult cases that august assembly has well de-

served this name in any sense but an invidious one. For its *corrections* of many errors the country owes that house a debt of gratitude, which it can only pay by uniformly supporting its dignity and privileges against every aggression. Immediately after this debate, when the petition was ordered to lie upon the table, Mr. Pitt presented his India Bill, which was read a first time and ordered to be printed. On this occasion, he did not refuse Mr. Fox the time for consideration which had been denied to the former India Bill, but consented to a delay of two days at his request. Lord Charles Spencer immediately proposed a motion, couched in terms of the deepest hostility to ministers, and the mode in which they had been appointed. Mr. Powys, who had great weight in the House, strongly opposed this motion ; but he blamed the proceedings while he lauded the talents of the leaders of both parties. He disapproved the manner in which Mr. Pitt had obtained office, and deprecated the coalition of Mr. Fox with Lord North, which nobleman he feared was the chief obstacle to a most desirable consummation—a union between the two great politicians just mentioned. Mr. Fox took advantage of this remark to declare that he neither courted nor avoided such a union, if it could be formed in the prospect of permanence and on sound general principles ; he also defended his former coalition. At the same time he accused the Government of having arrived at power by treachery, and a conspiracy against the constitution, though he added by way of softening down these observations, “ I venerate the character of the young man who holds the reins of government at present ; I admire his virtues, and respect his ability.” After several speeches, of which that of Mr. Dundas was considered the most powerful, Mr. Pitt simply threw

himself on the candour of the House, and declared that if this motion passed before his India Bill was discussed, they would condemn him "unheard, unknown, untried, unconvicted." Nevertheless, the motion was carried by 205 to 184 giving a majority of 21.

The next meeting of the House was in committee on the state of the nation. In consequence of what Mr. Fox had said, a rumour had arisen that a negotiation was on foot for effecting the union between him and Mr. Pitt, to which Mr. Powys had alluded; and upon this pretence Mr. Rolle postponed a motion for the production of papers, of which he had given notice. Mr. Fox rose at once, and vehemently denied the truth of the report, and declared the postponement of a motion on such grounds was most indecent. At the same time, he professed his astonishment that ministers could continue to hold office after the last division; but to give them leisure to reflect, he would advise the postponement of that day's committee till Monday, when if they did not give his Majesty such advice as circumstances demanded, the House should take some step which would compel them to resign. Yet he acknowledged before he sat down, that as far as the union proposed was concerned, he was no man's enemy, but he would have gentlemen consider the practicability of uniting persons of almost irreconcilable principles. Mr. Pitt, in reply, echoed this sentiment to the full; and declared that he was ready, in committee on the state of the nation, to explain and defend the motives which induced him to continue in office. On this occasion Sir Richard Hill observed, that Mr. Fox had greatly changed his opinion about the importance of majorities and coalitions; for only three sessions before he had placed his back to the lobby door, and cried out, "No coalition, no Treasury bench." He knew how to

accommodate himself to the maxim he found most convenient. He then concluded some very pointed remarks with the following humorous story, the drift of which the previous history will have rendered sufficiently plain. "There were two neighbouring farmers, Sir, who for many years had regarded each other with such extreme enmity, that they declared they could not trust themselves together in the same room. The name of one was *Whighouse*, the other *Toryman*. At length farmer Whighouse said to farmer Toryman, 'You and I can never thrive in the world by all this jangling and snarling—I have a proposal to make to you by which we may both get money apace, and provide for our numerous and clamorous families. We have both of us a great deal of dirty work to do, and if you will lend me your horses to draw me through the mire, I will lend you mine, so come let us join our teams together.' Says farmer Toryman, 'Why, I like your proposal very well, but I fear our horses will not pull together.' To this Mr. Whighouse replied, 'Never fear that; we must pat them, and feed them, and coax them, and give them some fine trappings, which will make them as tractable as possible, so that they will carry either of us, though we are not very light weights, or do anything else we want.' So all former animosities were presently forgotten, and on every occasion they called one another 'My good friend,' 'My worthy neighbour,' &c., which, to be sure, made the other neighbours laugh. At length things took a serious turn; for these two men became overgrown and overbearing, and began to encroach upon their neighbours, to break down their fences, and were actually proceeding to try and get possession of their very deeds and leases, when a worthy gentleman in that part of the country thought it right to inform their land-

lord of their proceedings, who dismissed them from their farms, and put in worthier tenants. Now, without any further explanation of the moral of this my story, I will conclude by saying to old England, *De te fabula narratur.*"

The effect of this humorous description of the consequences of the far-famed coalition, may be readily imagined. Indeed it might almost be fancied that Mr. Rowland Hill had made it, so like is it to what he would have said, had he been in Parliament. Mr. Fox, disconcerted by the non-resignation of Mr. Pitt, and chagrined by the majority not being larger, confined himself that night to declamation, hazarding no further motion till the fate of the new India Bill was decided.

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. PITT AND THE OPPOSITION. ADDRESSES TO THE THRONE, AND ANSWERS. REPRESENTATION TO THE KING. SIR RICHARD HILL'S SPEECH AND VERSES. LORD NORTH VERY ANGRY. NO GOOD ACCOUNT OF THE GREAT DEBATE, AND THE REASON. END OF THE STRUGGLE. REMARKS. REFORM. SPEECH OF SIR R. HILL. LORD NORTH. MR. BURKE PUT DOWN. SIR RICHARD HILL'S PROPOSALS FOR NEW TAXES. ATTENTION TO THEM FROM MR. PITT. SINGULAR SITUATION OF MR. BURKE. CLOSE OF THE SESSION. MEETING OF PARLIAMENT. SIR RICHARD HILL'S PLAN FOR TAXING PLACES OF DIVERSION. REMARKS. THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

REJECTION OF MR. PITT'S INDIA BILL.

Mr. Pitt's India Bill was negatived on its second reading by a majority of eight,¹ and subsequently rejected without a division. Upon this Mr. Fox obtained leave to bring in another Bill, which he avowed would be similar in principle to the one before refused by the House of Lords. Expecting that this measure would be met by Mr. Pitt with a dissolution of Parliament, he called upon him to say whether he meant to take that step or not. Mr. Pitt's silence on this occasion produced a vehement debate, and loud demands for the declaration of his intentions; but he continued unmoved, till General Conway accused him of sending agents to

¹ The numbers were 222 and 214.

bribe the electors. Upon this, he rose to order, and challenged the General to produce an instance of the corruption alleged, but assured the House he should not follow the example of his intemperate language, and concluded with the words which Livy describes Scipio as having applied to Fabius, *si nullâ aliâ re, modestiâ certè et temperando linguæ, adolescens senem videro*. All the force of the opposition was applied in vain to break his resolute silence, and the House adjourned till the following day, the unusual one of Saturday, with the most ominous menaces, mutterings, and upbraidings. The next day the attendance of Members, whose countenances betrayed their deep anxiety, was uncommonly numerous, and such was the sensation produced on the youthful Minister's entrance, that Mr. Powys became so unnerved that he sobbed aloud when he rose to speak. He contented himself with putting this question to Mr. Pitt—"May the House expect to be in existence, and to meet again on Monday next?" Mr. Pitt, after some hesitation, replied that he had no intention to give such advice to the crown as would prevent their re-assembling on that day. Mr. Powys expressed his satisfaction, and an adjournment till Monday took place. Upon mature consideration, Mr. Pitt declined dissolving the Parliament at the then trying juncture, for he had the sagacity to mark the symptoms which shewed that a period more favourable to his objects would soon arrive. Threats and invectives were reiterated against him night after night, with equal violence, and almost in the same words; but he asserted that "his heart, his principles, his hands were pure," and that neither clamour, artifice, or unfounded imputation should ever divert him from the course he thought it his duty to pursue. He felt that the nation would not long continue indifferent or

silent, as to the mighty struggle within the walls of Parliament. His opinion was quickly confirmed by various addresses to the King expressing confidence in his administration, and condemning Mr. Fox's India Bill, and the violence manifested by his party in the House of Commons, in consequence of his dismissal from office. At the same time they conveyed to the Sovereign assurances of support, in the exercise of his unquestionable prerogative. These manifestations of increasing popularity, gave courage to the mind which had discernment to foresee, and patient fortitude to wait for them. Mr. Pitt nevertheless had yet to stand against a host of Parliamentary opponents. He had also to endure the pressing urgency of friends whom he respected, strengthened by the declared sense of the House of Commons, who wished him to unite with his mighty rival. He refused to quit office till removed by his Sovereign, upon which the adverse majority of the Lower House determined to approach the throne, and to lay before the King, by such of its members as were Privy Counsellors, the resolutions they had adopted against his Minister. The House of Lords, however, supported the prerogative of the Crown in an address carried by a majority of 47. The words of the King, in a communication to Mr. Pitt, when this address was expected to be moved, should ever be remembered by all true patriot friends of Britain's unrivalled constitution:—"I trust the House of Lords will this day feel that the hour is come, for which the wisdom of our ancestors established that respectable corps in the state, to prevent either the Crown or the Commons from encroaching on the rights of each other." The decision of the House of Lords produced a great sensation both in and out of Parliament, and was commented on with much ingenuity by

each party. His Majesty, with great firmness, resolved not to dismiss his Ministers, and they not to resign; and Mr. Pitt communicated to the House a message to this effect. The consequence of this was at length, after various manœuvres, an address to the King, which was met by a very temperate answer, but not in compliance with the wishes of the friends of Mr. Fox and his majority. Hereupon he determined to propose another address to the throne, which was agreed to by a majority of 12, and to which his Majesty replied with his former mildness and firmness. This induced Mr. Fox to move a representation to the King on his answers to the Commons. On this occasion, Sir Richard Hill said, Mr. Fox had compared his Right Honourable Friend Mr. Pitt to a receiver of stolen goods, and that in return he should beg to remind him, that they who in crowded places were the loudest in their vociferations to the people to take care of their pockets, were not the least busy oftentimes in picking them. "How far," he added, "this conduct is similar to that of those who tell us the constitution is in danger by his Majesty's present Ministers continuing in office, will perhaps be seen if we consider that the constitution is never in greater danger, than when any one branch of the legislature attempts to make inroads, encroachments, and innovations upon the others, by which that nice equilibrium is destroyed, which has caused the British government to be the glory of our nation, and the envy and admiration of the whole world. I do therefore affirm, Sir, that if his Majesty had given any other answer to the late address than what he has given, instead of shewing his paternal regard for the constitution, he would have signed its death warrant." Sir Richard Hill then facetiously alluded to the pathetic speeches of Mr. Powys, for whom he had a

great respect, though he could not resist a droll remark upon the dread that good man had expressed, that "the funeral of the House of Commons" was near at hand. "I hope," said Sir Richard drily, "he will not continue to think the funeral of the House of Commons so near at hand as he has seemed to apprehend; but if he remains in the same opinion, the least the House can do will be to vote him to perform the office of undertaker on that occasion." This was followed by great laughter, and made Lord North look very angry. Sir Richard then said, he had versified the answer to the address, he conceived Mr. Fox would have desired; and as this gentleman was the great mover in the affair, and the men of his party only little wheels moved by him, the great one, he had worded it as spoken personally to him, and should by permission read it to the House. He called it

HIS MAJESTY'S MOST GRACIOUS ANSWER TO THE MOVER OF A
CERTAIN ADDRESS.

With all humility I own,
Thy power supreme to mount my throne,
And to thy guardian care I give
"That scare-crow thing - Prerogative."¹
O teach my crown to know its place,
Hide it beneath the Speaker's mace.²
To rule and reign be solely thine,
The name of King be only mine.
All hail to thee, Great Carlo Khan,³
The Prince's Prince, the People's man,⁴

¹ Lord North's expression in one of his speeches.

² It was proposed by a Member to put the mace under the table, if the Ministers succeeded in the great struggle.

³ In allusion to a caricature of Mr. Fox riding on an elephant in the character of Carlo Khan, during the discussion of the India Bill.

⁴ The Man of the People was the name given to Mr. Fox in the height of his popularity.

I'll ne'er presume to damp thy joy,
 I'll now dismiss the "Angry Boy"¹
 Though virtue be his only crime,
 That's fault enough at such a time.
 Now for the rest I leave to you,
 The terms of "fair and equal" too.
 The Board's before thee, all is thine,
 So let thy needy jobbers dine.
 But don't forget the obsequious crew
 Of thy fair spouse *en cordon bleu*,²
 Nor grudge with handfuls to solace
 Old Israel's circumeised race,
 Of useful friends about Duke's place.

The extreme amusement caused by these lines, read with much humorous expression, nettled Lord North beyond endurance. Instead of joining in the laugh they drew forth, he rose up in vehement indignation, and said it was "exactly that kind of nonsense about Carlo Khan, &c. that had misled the weak part of the country so strangely." He then attacked the administration with great bitterness, and accused them of resisting the motion, solely from a fear that the "true grounds of the dispute" should become known. The debate was concluded by a long speech from Mr. Samuel Smith, after which the division took place, giving the opposition a majority of *one*. It was then ordered that the Representation should be presented to his Majesty, by the Members of the House who were Privy Counsellors.

Never was there a stronger excitement in the public mind respecting any debate than this. So great was the anxiety to hear the proceedings on that memorable day, that members went down to the House at ten

¹ Mr. Sheridan's celebrated retort on Mr. Pitt caused him to go by this name.

² Lord North.

o'clock in the morning to procure admission for their friends to the gallery. By eleven o'clock the place allotted to strangers was crowded, and its occupants sat patiently without any business from that hour till four in the afternoon, when they had to listen to counsel on Nisbet's Divorce Bill before they could hope to reap any reward of their fatigue. After all, they were doomed to be disappointed; for Sir James Lowther came to the gallery with a friend, the brother of the Member for St. Alban's, at half past three, and could not gain admission for him. Nettled at this, just as the great debate was going to begin, he stated his disappointment, and that he believed there were many persons present not introduced by members; therefore he insisted on enforcing the standing order of the House, and desired that all strangers might withdraw. Several Members interfered and pressed him most earnestly not to have recourse to this step, but he persisted in having the gallery cleared. On this account, even the Parliamentary Register was obliged to go without any detail of the speeches, and to content itself with a short outline of the proceedings given by a member.¹

The issue of this debate placed Mr. Pitt in a situation which afforded high satisfaction to his Royal Master, who in his reply to the communication of what had passed on that memorable day, thus graciously expressed himself to his firm and conscientious minister. "I shall ever with pleasure consider, that by the prudence, as well as rectitude, of one person in the House of Commons, this great change has been effected; and

¹ Bishop Tomline in his *Life of Pitt* has noticed the intense anxiety alluded to, and the early crowding of the gallery, but has omitted the remarkable circumstance here narrated, of the enforcement of the standing order.

that he will ever be able to reflect with satisfaction, that in having supported me, he has saved the constitution, the most perfect of human formation." Mr. Powys, the day after this division, reiterated his opinion that the House of Commons was conquered; "for though it once could bestow a crown, it could not now even procure the dismissal of a minister;" but he overlooked the very important distinction of a people and a parliament of one sentiment, as at the time of the revolution, and of a parliament and people at variance, as they were during that conflict. With regard to Lord North, it is but justice to say, that during all attempts, while this contest was at its height, to form a union between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, he manifested a very candid and disinterested spirit, offering again and again to withdraw every personal pretension that might stand in the way of a peaceable issue. This struggle, in which one of the highest constitutional points was decided, and which was the great crisis of Mr. Pitt's political career, ended in the dissolution of Parliament on the 25th of March. It was on this occasion that the far-famed canvass of the ladies for Mr. Fox, took place in Westminster.

The political merits of this extraordinary period have been too often discussed by the adherents of either party, to render any further allusion to them desirable in these pages. Nor is it my intention to enter upon such topics in a volume, which I intend rather as a history of the progress of religion, than of politics during the eventful days of the last century. It was impossible, however, considering the part Sir Richard Hill took in those unexampled debates, not to give a brief outline of the chief incidents of the moment; the more especially as Mr. Wilberforce, who felt the same anxiety for the revival of religion, concurred with him in opinion on

the great questions before Parliament. The voices of the mighty rivals in that wondrous collision of political principle and power of eloquence, have long been hushed in the honoured sanctuary that holds the ashes of our noblest dead ; and who is there that could refuse the homage which is due to the memory of each ?

Genius, and taste, and talent gone,
For ever tombed beneath the stone,
Where—taming thought to human pride!—
The mighty chiefs sleep side by side.
Drop upon Fox's grave the tear,
'Twill trickle to his rival's bier ;
O'er Pitt's the mournful requiem sound
And Fox's shall the notes rebound.¹

Thus did the great minstrel of the North pour forth the emotions of his generous mind ; nor is the heart to be envied whose chords refuse to vibrate in unison with notes so enchanting and so pure. If the genius of Pitt, even in its opening day, was unconquerable, he had a rival to contend with, who wrestled courageously till he fell, but breathed forth no malice when he rose again, and utterly disdained recourse to any despicable cunning, the offspring of the ignoble mind, but which exalted talent constantly repels. Of his leading points of opinion each man has a right to his own views ; but generosity will ever do justice to his ingenuous, straightforward, unsuspecting character, which won the admiration of his contemporaries, and has lost nothing in the calmer retrospect of these distant times. One gem, alas, is wanting in the sparkling circlets which Fame has placed on the brows of both these unrivalled champions in the legislative arena—it is the jewel which, amidst the contempt of a world ignorant of its value, Wilberforce and

¹ Marmion, Introduction to Canto I.

Hill sought for as "the pearl of great price," that will shine with increasing brilliancy, while dimness passes over every human accomplishment that is not formed to reflect the light of heaven.

When the new Parliament assembled after the dissolution, frequent conversations took place on the subject of Reform; and Mr. Pitt was much urged by Mr. Alderman Sawbridge to bring forward some measure for a more equal representation of the people. In the midst, however, of so many urgent claims upon his attention, it was utterly impossible for him to find time to draw up any proposition with adequate care and reflection. He did not at all vary in his opinions respecting it, but wished the matter to be deferred till another session, when he expressed his readiness to originate some plan. This did not satisfy the impetuous alderman, and accordingly he moved on the 16th of June, for a committee of inquiry into the state of the representation of the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament. Mr. Pitt at once avowed his approval of the mover's intention, but declared against "the expediency of attempting on the present, what was much more likely to succeed on some future occasion." Mr. Wilberforce also trusted that his attachment to the object of the motion would not be doubted, but considered the proceeding premature and calculated to risk the design in view. Mr. Fox agreed with Mr. Sawbridge, and conceived that no business on the minister's hands could be of more consequence, than a radical reform in the constitution of the Commons. He accused Mr. Pitt of "reasons for his shyness, which, however nameless, had their force;" and concluded by calling on him to come forward, "to do his duty and acquit himself of his promise to the House, to his constituents, and to the public." A long debate ensued in

which Sir Richard Hill took a part. Soon after Mr. Sawbridge had declared his intention to propose his motion, Sir Richard said, that with respect and deference to the honourable House, he asserted that it was an observation of a wiser man than any within these walls, that “to every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” Perhaps, he added, it might not be amiss that he should inform some noble Lords and gentlemen in that august assembly, that the words were the words of Solomon, and that they were taken from an obsolete book, commonly called the Bible. The mover of the present motion he thought could have had but little regard to this precept, or he would never have brought it on at a time when there was so much urgent national business to be attended to. But the ruling passion would be uppermost; and when a man was tired of every thing else, he could mount his own hobby with alacrity. He declared his coincidence in the view taken by Mr. Pitt, and deprecated the injudicious and ill-timed ardour of Mr. Sawbridge, and told him he doubted if there were a division, whether his hobby would even carry double, or if he persevered in acting the Quixotic part he had assumed, whether he would find a single Sancho to mount his Rosinante with him. For his part, he had been considering what could be his reasons, and the three following had suggested themselves. First, it might give him a little more importance; secondly, he might imagine it would raise his popularity, and wipe away from the minds of his constituents, what they might think some little *faux pas* in his late conduct. He could not conceive, however, that sensible, judicious, opulent citizens would think the better of him for trying at the beginning of a new Parliament to stop parliamentary business. Thirdly, he might suppose he should

lessen the popularity of the minister ; but he thought his conduct had been so uniformly consistent on the point before them, that all attempts to injure him on that score would be poor and futile indeed. Nay, if Mr. Pitt attempted the point now, he believed it would actually render him unpopular. Would it not be said on all sides,—What is to become of loans and taxes?—What of commerce?—What of public credit?—What of India? That therefore which at another time would be expedient, was now most completely *mal à propos*. After some other remarks in the same strain, accompanied with considerable humour, Sir Richard Hill proceeded to state his opinion that something was wanted in the way of reform, but that it was no easy matter to see how to rectify the wrong and supply the want. This would puzzle wiser heads than his and the honourable mover's. Those gentlemen who made no scruple of voting away rights and charters, might think there was an easy way of getting rid of as many rotten boroughs as they pleased ; others on the contrary might cry out against all improvement as *innovation*. As he was not in favour of hasty proceedings, neither would be deterred by the stale cry of innovation ! Innovation ! This was so very absurd, that it was only fit to come out of the lips of *the Pope* or *Mother Goose* ! If that plea be admitted, good-night to everything but ignorance and barbarism. According to this plea, no one thing that was wrong ought ever to be amended, nay, the longer the abuse and error had existed, the longer they ought to exist ; and the state or nation which had groaned for centuries under any particular grievance, ought to bear the burden of that grievance as long as the world stood ; even injustice might be sanctioned by time, and oppression by being oppressed. If this doctrine had always been

adhered to, where would have been their civil liberties at that day when they withstood not the imaginary, but the real, arbitrary ideas of prerogative, which some contended for as the very basis of the constitution, and which would have made the English diadem as absolute as that of France? Above all, where would have been that religion which came down to them streaming in the blood of Protestants, martyrs, and confessors? That religion, which, however despised and ridiculed it might be in that degenerate day of profligacy and dissipation, instead of being ashamed of, they ought to glory in, and to make the rule of all their conduct both in public and private life. Overwhelmed by arbitrary power, and sunk into the dregs of popish superstition, they would then have had nothing to console themselves with, but the reflection of having steered clear of every attempt towards any reformation either in Church or State, for fear of the danger of innovation. According to that doctrine, a physician might say to a patient of a long unhealthy state of body, "To be sure you are in a very bad way, but I shall not attempt to relieve you, for you have been sick so long, that sick you clearly ought always to continue." Now certainly this country had been for several years previous to the administration of the noble Lord in the blue ribbon, in an *atrophy*, and during the time he held the reins of government, in a *galloping consumption*; and therefore at least after such bleedings as it had gone through, he could see no objection to trying the gentle alterative of a moderate reform, when the body politic was in a fit state to receive it, which certainly nobody but a quack would say the present was. He should not with his views vote against the measure; but he would not vote for its introduction now for the reasons stated, and therefore should go home

and try to get a good night's rest. Before he went away, he would take the liberty to add, that he thought there were wanted also reform in their debates, and reform in their tempers while debating. As therefore he began with one saying of the wise man, he should end with another: "An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression. But a soft answer turneth away wrath."¹

After a few words from Mr. M. A. Taylor, Lord North rose to deprecate not only the motion before the House, but the idea of reform altogether, which he was convinced could never be adopted without a deep wound to the constitution. He then proceeded to a curious mode of argument to induce Mr. Pitt to abandon it entirely. He observed, that Mr. Pitt had said that if the Honourable Alderman did not make his motion on that day, he himself would make one early in the next session on the same subject. But as the present motion had been made, the Right Honourable Gentleman was absolved from his promise, the condition of it having been violated; he begged leave, therefore, to assure him that he did not stand pledged to make any motion of the kind, and he hoped he would not. Perhaps the idea that this argument was singularly ingenious, put the noble ex-minister into an unusually good humour; for in noticing Sir Richard Hill's attack upon him, he said, that as he was in tolerably good plight, he supposed the Honourable Baronet did not, when talking of a galloping consumption, allude to him personally. Most assuredly he conceived that his frame did not exhibit any symptoms of that disease. After playing with this idea for some time to the amusement of the House, he sud-

¹ This question is not in the *exact* words of Scripture. It was from memory at the moment.

denly adverted to the American war. Then his tone altogether changed, and he commenced a warm defence of his proceedings. He next declared that the motion of that night would have his decided negative. Mr. Pitt, as may be imagined, rejected Lord North's ingenious advice in the first sentence of his speech, combated his various positions one after another, and declared he should even vote for the motion, to shew his zeal for reform. Mr. Fox supported the motion, but deprecated the allusions to the American war, and was violent in his remarks on his great opponent. When he sat down, the House became clamorous for the question. In the midst of the confusion, Mr. Burke rose, when the uproar was redoubled. For a moment they listened; but quickly became more impatient than ever, when Mr. Burke began to speak about the American war. He was greatly enraged, but his fury only added to the vociferations of several young members, who seemed determined to put him down. Full of indignation, he exclaimed, "I have something to say which I conceive is well worth hearing, but it is too much for me to stand up against so violent a clamour. I find myself in the midst of rocks, the sides of which resound with the intemperate lashing of a roaring surge, and therefore, though I have got the better of those feelings with which they who are so stupidly clamorous hope to oppress me, I think it most prudent for the moment to bow to the storm." Upon this the magician of written eloquence, whose voice and gait destroyed the charm when he spoke, resumed his seat, and remained silent for the rest of the evening. At length Lord Mulgrave moved the previous question, and after several speeches, it was carried by a majority of 74.¹

¹ The numbers were *ayes* 199, *noes* 125.

Sir Richard Hill took but little part in the various discussions which succeeded this last debate, until the several ingenious propositions of Mr. Pitt for new taxes were brought before Parliament. When the House went into committee on the brick tax, he was the first who addressed it. He said he did not rise to oppose the tax *in toto*, but he wished to see it made as unexceptionable, and as little partial and oppressive as possible. Herein he was sure he should meet the wishes of the Right Honourable Gentleman who proposed it, and whose humanity and candour had been equally manifested, in patiently hearing and sifting every objection which could be brought from any quarter, against every article contained in his budget, in the opening of which, it must be fresh in the memory of the House, he delivered himself at once with the feeling of a patriot, and the firmness which became a Chancellor of the Exchequer. And whoever had seen such a *rara avis* as a minister giving the sum of £3,000¹ a year, out of his own pocket, in order that the same sum might revert to the public, would not easily be persuaded that such a minister did not feel for the public distress, and did not wish to exonerate rather than oppress an already exhausted nation, of which, however, his character and abilities marked him out, by the blessing of Providence, to be the guardian, the deliverer, and the friend. After this preface, Sir Richard Hill proceeded to state his various objections to the tax. At length he observed it might be said, "find a better tax." He would not reply by saying, "find a worse," for he was persuaded that the worthy Right Honourable Gentleman found every

¹ Sir Richard Hill here alluded to the well-known refusal by Mr. Pitt of a lucrative office, for the sake of saving its emoluments to the country.

thing so highly taxed before he had the management of public affairs, that there was nothing left for him to tax, unless he could find out a method of taxing the moon and the stars; for as to the light of the sun, it was already taxed twice over. To be sure, it had been observed that there was an annual period, in which every simpleton in the kingdom became a sort of temporary Chancellor of the Exchequer; he should, nevertheless, incur the risk of being looked upon as one of that number, by saying that he held in his hand some substitutes, which, if the brick tax were given up, he thought would be neither vexatious nor oppressive, which would easily be gathered, and not easily evaded, and which would produce a sum somewhat exceeding a hundred thousand pounds.

The first was a double Sunday toll to be paid at all turnpikes throughout the kingdom. At present, he believed, this was confined to the environs of the metropolis, and brought in a vast sum; but if extended all over the nation, as there was as much travelling on Sundays as on any two days besides, especially near great towns, it would be very productive indeed. Besides, the objections which were made on a former occasion against double tolls on all days (*viz.*, that they would hurt internal commerce) had no foundation if they confined them to Sundays, on which day there was an express Act of Parliament to prevent any waggons or carriages travelling for hire from being on the road. This tax, therefore, would affect no branch of commerce, but the flourishing one of Sabbath-breaking; and if it should keep a few rambles at home, and send them to church, which he much questioned, where would be the harm of it? At a very moderate computation, this tax would bring in £15,000 a year. Secondly, he proposed a duty

of sixpence per gross on corks. He was not so good a financier as to pretend to ascertain what this would bring in, but it would be something very considerable, and he believed, would be objected to by none, except those who loved their bottle better than their country. Thirdly, a duty on shot, powder, guns, and pistols, except for the use of the army and navy. This he stated at £10,000. Fourthly, a duty on pins, needles, black pins, and fans. These articles collectively might produce the same sum, viz. £10,000. Fifthly, a duty on prints, from twopence per dozen to one shilling each, and upwards; also on printed music, message cards, visiting tickets, and wafers. These he also put together at £10,000. And when he considered that one print¹ only of some men riding on an elephant with a human face, brought, as he had been informed, to one shop nearly three hundred pounds, he certainly did not make his statement too high. Sixthly, all places of public diversion, including playhouses, operas, masquerades, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, Sadler's Wells, Astley's, *cum multis aliis*, throughout the kingdom. Where a shilling was now paid, to be advanced to one shilling and threepence, which would make threepence duty; and where two shillings and sixpence, to be advanced to three shillings, and so on progressively, to be gathered by check tickets. These places, on a very moderate computation, would bring in £25,000. This tax affected neither land nor trade; it oppressed neither the poor nor the industrious; it injured no business; and after all, it was perfectly voluntary, and took not a farthing out of any man's pocket, but what, by his very presence at the place, he tacitly acknowledged that he

¹ A caricature of Mr. Fox at the time of the India Bill.

could very well spare. It might be unpopular among the dissipated, but it would meet the approbation of every man of sense, reason, and religion. Seventhly, a duty on clocks and watches ; on the former, a duty of three shillings each ; on the latter, every one who wore a watch to pay one shilling yearly. If above the degree of a servant, two shillings and sixpence. This might also bring in yearly £10,000. This tax, he confessed, was suggested to him by one of his worthy constituents, but not in the mode he had mentioned it. Eighthly, an additional duty on cards and dice, and a tax on all plates for horse races. This would certainly produce near £8,000. Ninthly, a duty on ropes, twine, and pack-thread, except for the use of the navy ; and if to these he added whipcord, when he considered in how short a space the Noble Lord in the blue ribbon consumed three hundred pounds worth, those articles would cut no mean figure in his calculation, though he would not pretend to ascertain exactly what the whole would bring in. Tenthly, magazines and newspapers, the latter of which, he thought, would well bear an additional halfpenny. But really, Sir Richard said, this was so tender a point, and there were so many interested gentlemen who heard him in the gallery, that he would drop the subject. He was sure the members should be very cautious how they offended the newspaper editors, for they had them all under their thumbs, and he, as well as others, were often obliged to them for making them speak very manly, animated speeches, which within those walls they heard nothing of. However, if it would not look like countenancing the sale of them, he would have every Sunday newspaper pay an additional penny. Having now, Sir Richard declared, gone through all that he had to offer on the subject, if in the course of what he had said, he

had dropped anything which might have been of use, he was sure the Right Honourable Gentleman would condescend to pick it up, notwithstanding the insignificant quarter from which it fell. If not, he should look upon it as his duty to stand by him in those taxes he had proposed, that on bricks only excepted; on this, however, he should not attempt to divide the House, for whatever else he might be doubtful about, this one thing he was sure of—and he asked them to mark well his words—that if they withdrew their support from that right honourable gentleman, Old England and the young son of Chatham would fall together.

This speech of Sir Richard Hill was listened to with much attention, and was handsomely acknowledged by Mr. Pitt, who said he had a due sense of the goodness of the honourable baronet in the hints he had given, and should undoubtedly profit by his suggestions.

The exertions made during this session by Mr. Pitt, and the eloquence and information he displayed on every occasion, must be looked upon, considering his age and inexperience, beyond all parallel in the history of orators and statesmen. One scarcely knows which to admire most, his energy or his ingenuity—the strength which enabled him to stand unshaken beneath the weight of the cares of a mighty empire and the force of an unequalled opposition, or the ease with which he unravelled the tangled skein which came into his hands from those of his predecessors. Be his view of his political principles what it may, no man can deny him the admiration his integrity and genius demand. One of the peculiarities of that extraordinary session, was the situation of Mr. Burke. Eloquence which to this day draws forth the warmest emotions of every reader of his wondrous pages, was seldom received by the House without

silent frowns and inattention, or clamorous opposition. Never did there rise in Parliament a more unwelcome speaker ; and it is almost impossible to conceive what the gestures and voice could have been, that utterly disfigured the creations of his lofty and brilliant imagination. His magnificent language on the affairs of India was met by uproar, and efforts were perpetually made to silence him. Mr. Grenville went so far as to tell him, that he was astonished he should press himself so frequently on the House ; and after one of his most surprising efforts, Mr. Pitt took not the slightest notice of a word he had said, evidently because it fell powerless on impatient and dissatisfied hearers. Such was the mortification of this wonderful man, and such the reception of speeches, that will be considered of the highest order of composition as long as our language lasts. What a lesson does this teach every man whose mind, framed for higher and nobler flights, contents itself with the lower regions of this vale of trouble ; and how does it lead to a true estimate of the false radiance of many a glittering gem in the diadem of earthly fame, which often rests uncasily on the living brow, and can give no joy to the dead.

On the 20th of August the session was closed by a speech from the throne, containing thanks for provision made for the better government of India, and the measures passed for the improvement of the revenue. Parliament did not meet again till the 25th of January, 1785, when the cause of its reassembling was an apprehension of ill consequences to the peace of Europe, from a quarrel between the Austrians and the Dutch. On the 9th of May Mr. Pitt opened the budget, when Sir Richard Hill renewed his proposition for a tax on places of public diversion. He observed that he considered it a disgrace to Great Britain as a protestant country, not

to draw some revenue from the money spent in dissipation. If five hundred thousand a year was spent in places of public entertainment, a fifth of it might be spared for the exigencies of the state. Every other country in Europe made their places of amusement contribute, and so ought we. The substance, however, of his arguments is embodied in a printed sheet he circulated at the time, which he called "A Plan for a Tax on Public Places of Diversion." It is as follows:—

"In general, taking the kingdom throughout, ninety-nine people out of a hundred shew themselves averse to every tax; but at least ninety-nine out of a hundred wish for a tax upon public diversions; and for this plain reason, because not one in a hundred ever frequent such places, and they who do frequent them, may, if they choose it, keep their money in their pockets, and at least employ themselves as usefully by staying away. However, as most probably every resort of pleasure would not have one attendant less by such a tax, it is certain that an immense sum would accrue to the revenue, if only twopence in a shilling were to be deducted for the use of the government.

"By the expression public diversions, I include all places throughout the kingdom where money is taken for admission; therefore, not only all exhibitions, but all spouting societies would be included.

"But in London alone, how prodigious would be the amount of such a tax, taking in the playhouses, the Opera, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, the Masquerades, Astley's Circus, Sadler's Wells, with at least fifty others of various kinds and denominations?

"Let it now be considered that such a tax would be entirely a voluntary one; no individual need pay a sixpence towards it, unless by his own choice; and it cer-

tainly cannot be called an oppressive tax, because when any person pays his money at the door, he, tacitly at least, acknowledges that he can without inconvenience, spare so much from his needful expenses; if otherwise, we can only pity his folly in squandering that in an idle gratification, which ought to have gone to the support of his family.

“Again, this is such a tax as never need be abandoned or changed, on account of its hurt to trade, and checking industry; consequently no petitions can ever be preferred against it. Tax vice and luxury, but spare trade and manufactures, is the language of the nation at large.

“Once more; is it not as reasonable that they who live in large cities or towns, should contribute towards the public good by having their diversions taxed, as they who reside wholly in the country? And yet how heavily does the burden fall upon them, for their dogs, gamekeepers, and game-licences? And I think it is at least as proper that a person should take out a licence for being a player, as for being a sportsman; and yet I believe many gentlemen who enter themselves as such, so widely mistake their mark, that perhaps two or three partridges serve them to shoot at all the season! Indeed, were every player to pay so much annually for a licence, it might preserve many an unhappy young man and woman from ruin, who, in a thoughtless or desperate moment, have thrown themselves on the stage, and from that time not only become useless members of society, but often the pests of it. Let me add, that I see no reason why every card-player should not take out a licence, as well as every wearer of powder.

“It may be said, that not to suffer us to amuse ourselves under our pressure would be hard indeed.

“This objection in a great measure overturns itself, and in two ways: first, because such a tax would tend to diminish the burdens complained of; since what was paid by playhouses, ought, in its proportion, to lessen the assessments on dwelling-houses. Secondly, they who on account of the duty would abstain from going to public places, will certainly have more money in their pockets to pay their other taxes, as well as for their domestic comforts; which comforts of every kind, with health both of body and mind, are enjoyed much more sensibly by those who do not mix with the giddy throng, than by those who do; to say nothing of the inconsistency of the professors of our holy religion spending hours, and even whole nights together, in scenes and occupations, where not only a total forgetfulness of everything that is serious and praiseworthy prevails, but where for the most part, the whole of the entertainment consists in seeing and hearing whatever tends to gratify and draw out the evil propensities of the heart, and to lead man from the only source of true happiness. It will be easily seen that I here allude particularly to masquerades.

“I now proceed to remark, that a tax upon public diversions would not in the smallest degree affect the poor, as they certainly, on account of their poverty, are prevented from going to them; so that there is no class of people whatever, except a few of the most dissipated among the middle and higher ranks, but what would cordially wish to see such a tax brought forward.

“It is true, the performers and managers of theatres, &c., would perhaps shew their indignation on the occasion; but these, of all people whatever, have the least cause of complaint, who, in the hardest times, draw such immense sums from the pockets of the public. I

may have been misinformed, but I have heard that it is no uncommon thing for some favourite singer or dancer, to get several hundred pounds for one night's performance : and this in a Protestant Christian country, where multitudes of poor conscientious curates, who labour the whole year, and even to extreme old age, for the good of souls, have scarcely bread for themselves, their wives, and families, and the allowance to many of them not more than thirty or forty pounds a year, whilst perhaps their idle employers are rolling in riches, indulging in luxury, or sunk in avarice. These things ought not to be. I am told also, that the managers and proprietors of some of the places of public diversions have, on their own authority, and for their own emoluments, considerably raised the prices of admission into the theatres ; if this be really the case, how could these gentlemen possibly object to a small levy on each ticket for the public benefit, half to be paid by the person going in, the other half by the proprietor, to be gathered by means of a check ticket, or by any other method ?

“ There are certainly some taxes by which even the rich have been gainers. I instance only the post-horse duty, which has made the price of travelling post so high, that many who always went with four horses to their chaise, now content themselves with a humble pair, by which means, though they pay duty for two horses, they save the expense of the other pair. Let them act as prudently in their public diversions ; instead of going to them four nights in a week, let them only go two ; and if they do not, at the end of each week, find themselves more healthy, wealthy, and wise, I am much mistaken.

“ It may be said I carry my argument much too far ; for if none were to frequent public places, the tax would

produce nothing at all. I answer, that then we should only be just where we now are ; still with the difference, that if the revenue were not benefited by the tax, the morals of the people would be, in proportion as it ceased to be productive."

Such was the public course pursued by Sir Richard Hill as a Member of Parliament, during the extraordinary period of the conflict and triumph of Mr. Pitt, an æra unquestionably of great importance and interest. His position when viewed through the medium of fair and impartial history, cannot fail to be seen in its true light by those who look upon him as a Christian Senator, boldly defending, in an age of great brilliancy of human wit and talent, but of awful darkness as to religion, principles then almost universally ridiculed, but since widely diffused and deservedly honoured. He avowed in the higher circles, the same plain truths that his brother Rowland was actively disseminating amongst the other classes of society, and both were characterised by an utter fearlessness of the contempt or opposition of man. They were peculiar men, eccentric undoubtedly ; but they lived and laboured in uncommon times. Had they been cast in the ordinary mould, they would not have fitted the situations which Providence destined them to fill. Human opinion may vary as to the paths they pursued ; but all who know the difficulties with which they had to contend, and the sacrifices they made, will pay a willing tribute to the memory of their high moral courage and unshaken integrity.

In the midst of the agitations of the political world, the mind of Sir Richard Hill remained fixed upon the great object of diffusing through every channel, a right sense of Christian duty. With this end in view, he sent to a newspaper of his own county, the subjoined com-

munication on the prevalent custom of taking the Lord's name in vain. The arguments he enforced, and the spirit in which he wrote, reflect much credit on his memory, while the faithful and affectionate remonstrance sent forth more than half a century ago, may perhaps even now be useful in checking a very common but extremely sinful habit. It was written at a time when his thoughts must have been occupied with excitements of no ordinary kind ; but the world had no power to divert from its high purposes, a heart possessed of that faith which at once enables the believer to overcome its allurements, and inspires him with holy zeal to contend against its sins.

Saturday, October 23, 1784.

To the Printer of the Shrewsbury Chronicle.

Mr. Wood,

As the Shrewsbury Chronicle is published every Saturday, and as a great many readers do not see it till the Sunday, I think no reasonable man can censure you, if, after the manner of the Saturday's Spectator, you should occasionally give a place to some religious subject, in the first page of your paper. In this persuasion, I send you a few observations on the custom of taking the Lord's name in vain, which is now become so very frequent, that we can go into few companies, without hearing that awful name sadly trifled with.

But as it is only from scripture that the nature of this sin can be ascertained, or indeed, that it can be known to be any sin at all, I may at least hope for the indulgence of every serious and Christian reader, if in combating this great, and I fear, still growing evil, I should

draw my weapons out of the storehouse of the infallible word.

When the finger of God wrote the ten commandments on two tables of stone, the observance of one of these commandments was not more solemnly enjoined than that of the other nine, nor was the breach of one attended with any smaller penalty than the breach of any of the rest. The same Almighty lawgiver, who said, in the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder," hath said in the third, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;" and that tremendous sentence which declareth, that, "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," as much follows the transgression of the third commandment, as that of all the rest; for we have apostolic authority to affirm, that "Whosoever keepeth the whole law, and yet offendeth in one point, he is guilty of all."

I have often remarked, that women are more apt to take the Lord's name in vain, than men; and that very polite ladies, who would immediately express their abhorrence at oaths and curses, can nevertheless introduce the sacred name of Jehovah into the most trifling conversation, with as much thoughtless unconcern, as a bargeman or soldier can vent profane execrations; and what is more extraordinary, whilst they deem such persons among the impious despisers of God, they fancy themselves perfectly innocent. But how great is such a delusion! Yet it is to be feared, that multitudes live and die under it, without ever seeing their guilt, and without ever knowing that nothing can save them from the condemnation they are liable to, but the all-sufficient sacrifice of Him "who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."

It is recorded of the learned Mr. Boyle, that he never mentioned the name of God without a pause ; and so great was the veneration of the Jews for the same divine name, that they would not knowingly put the foot upon a piece of paper on which it was written. There might perhaps be a degree of superstition in this ; but when contrasted with the light manner in which the name of the Lord is too often introduced into our ordinary conversation, if we censure the superstition of the Jew, we must much more condemn the want of reverence in the professing Christian.

The great sin of taking the Lord's name in vain, we may conclude, lies in the mention of that name with the lips, without having at the same time, any suitable reverence of it in the heart : and what reverence for the name of God they can lay claim to, who, when engaged in conversation about their worldly affairs, and even in their amusements, are continually exclaiming (shocking to repeat) O Lord ! O God ! O Christ ! Lord bless me ! Mercy on me ! with many other expressions of the same sort, let all the world, let even themselves judge. Nay, so much more frequent is this sin than many suppose, that I doubt not but according to the extent of the divine law, and without any forced construction of its meaning, the name of God is continually taken in vain in the very prayers of many, who run over our most excellent church service and offer up their addresses to God, with the very same spirit of thoughtlessness as they use his name in their common conversation. They cry as sinners for mercy, without any sense of the want of that mercy ; they supplicate the divine grace, without any real desire of obtaining what they ask for ; and when on their knees at the Lord's table, they declare to the Searcher of hearts, that they " come not trusting in

their own righteousness, but in God's manifold and great mercies ; and that the remembrance of their sins is grievous unto them, and the burden of them intolerable," whilst, it is to be feared, if we may form a judgment from the constant course of their lives, that they are utter strangers to any inward sorrow for sin at all, and are perfectly satisfied with their present attainments in grace and holiness.

Thus is the majesty of God frequently dishonoured under pretence of honouring him ; and not only is the common discourse of many turned into sin by light and wanton use of his sacred name, but their very devotions are contaminated with guilt, as being destitute of that pious reverence, and unaccompanied with that suitable disposition of heart, which can alone make our services acceptable to Him who requireth truth in the inward parts, but regardeth not the hypocritical compliments of the lip and knee."

CHAPTER XV.

JOURNAL OF MISS HILL DURING A CONTINENTAL TOUR. INCIDENTS
AND ANECDOTES. THE KING AND QUEEN OF FRANCE. ACCOUNT
OF VOLTAIRE IN A MANUSCRIPT OF MISS HILL.

FOREIGN TOURS.

THE principles upon which Sir Richard Hill acted as a Member of Parliament, have been sufficiently described in the foregoing account of the part he took in the House of Commons, at a most important period. It will not be necessary therefore to fatigue the reader, by continuing to trace him through the regular succession of his attendances in that place. Whenever any remarkable circumstance seems to demand attention, it will be noticed. The few years which intervened between the time referred to in the last chapter and the year 1791, were spent by him as usual, in the active promotion of the cause he had most at heart, and in the improvement of his seat at Hawkstone. During a part of this time journies were made to the continent, by his excellent sister Miss Jane Hill, accompanied by several friends ; also by himself, in the society of his brother Mr. Brian Hill.¹ There are some particulars con-

¹ His highly-esteemed nephew, the present Lord Hill, also accompanied him in one of his tours through Holland and Germany.

nected with both these excursions, that will be found to be amusing and instructive. The little journal kept by Miss Hill is still in existence, and contains a brief but curious description of many things, the aspects of which are altogether changed by the vast mutations that have taken place in continental society. This tour extended no farther than to part of Flanders, Germany, and France; but how have the cities then visited, been since shaken and altered by convulsions they little foresaw; and if we have been spared the desolations of the awful shock of empires, our safeguard under God, was in those principles which the pious members of the family of Sir Richard Hill so strenuously advocated in the midst of the gross darkness that covered this privileged island.

From Calais, where Miss Hill and her friends landed, they departed towards Flanders in the old-fashioned mode of the day. The coach of a nobleman¹ and his lady who travelled with them, went first, drawn by six horses, driven by postillions in the grotesque accoutrements and boots then so common in France. Miss Hill and her friends followed in a smaller vehicle of her own; but the postillions of each wore scarlet and gold, with immense pigtails and ear-rings. On their way, one of the first persons they met was a pedlar drawing his own cart, dressed in crimson velvet lined with green silk, a bag wig, ruffles, and silk stockings—a thorough specimen of the country the man belonged to, under the old *régime*. At Ghent, they were invited to drink tea with the Lady Abbess and Lady Prioress of a convent of Benedictine nuns, with a select party of the sisterhood. One old nun was so extremely talkative, as

¹ Lord Montague.

to make an impression which led to inquiries concerning her history, which was certainly not of a kind to warrant any particular forwardness. It came out, that after this loquacious lady had been some time professed, she was entrusted with the care of the purse, but quickly ran away with it in company of a favourite *inamorato*. When the money was pretty well exhausted, she turned penitent, and went back to the convent to make confession of her crime. She was immediately condemned to be kept a whole year in a dungeon under ground, on bread and water, and to suffer a variety of severe penances, till at length her repentance was pronounced sincere, and she was restored to the society of her sisters.

Miss Hill complained very much of the manner in which the Belgian lower orders treated their wives in those days. She frequently saw three or four great fellows sitting in a barge, smoking at their ease, while their poor women were drawing it along. Men were also seen to load their females with heavy trunks on a journey, while they only carried some extremely light parcels. In this respect they are certainly changed for the better, though they are still to a great degree unaltered, in another point of view, which shocked the pure protestant feelings of our travellers. Their attachment to the show and superstitions of Popery, though circumstances have obliged them to curtail some of its splendours, remains less diminished than in most other countries. The party from Hawkstone arrived at Brussels on the day of the Nativity of the Virgin, and witnessed with surprise and regret the magnificent ceremonies of the festival. The whole interior of a fine church was decorated with the most ingenious devices. Orange trees were placed all over it, with two flags fastened to each; and in the midst the figure of the Virgin was

elevated, dressed most gorgeously, and under cover of a very costly canopy. She was attired in an enormous bell hoop, with a train of rich blue and silver and coloured tissue. Her petticoat was pink under silver gauze, and over her shoulders was thrown a mantle of the same colour covered with fine point lace. Round her neck were two large rows of pearls, and in her ears were an immense pair of glittering ear-rings. On her head and on that of the figure of the infant Jesus, were crowns of gold set in precious stones ; but the faces of both were black. Thus attired, she was carried all through the principal streets of the town, attended by a vast procession. The ground was strewn with flowers and boughs of trees, and the houses were hung with them also ; and as she passed along followed by the host, all the people fell on their knees. Though the sun shone bright and scorching, hundreds of lights were carried in the procession, and the church was filled with innumerable tapers and silver lamps, while the dresses of the priests, their silver censers, and the music, rendered the scene beyond conception imposing. " I felt," says Miss Hill, " greatly shocked ;" and who is there that knows the simplicity of truth as it is in Jesus, who has not on like occasions felt the same?

On their road to Spa, the tourists were amused by the contrast between the German and French postillions. Their different national characteristics, much the same to the present hour, are thus graphically portrayed by Miss Hill in her journal.¹ " The contrast of characters between the French and Germans, is strongly illustrated in the different behaviour of the postillions of the two countries. A French postillion is either laughing, or

¹ The passage is in inverted commas, and seems to be a quotation.

fretting, or singing, or swearing all the time he is on the road. If a hill or a bad road obliges him to go slowly, he will of a sudden begin cracking his whip above his head for a quarter of an hour together, without rhyme or reason; for he knows the horses cannot go a bit faster, and he does not intend they should. All the noise and emotion therefore means nothing, proceeding from the abhorrence of quiet every Frenchman imbibes from his mother's breast. On the contrary, the German postillion drives his horses with all possible tranquillity. He neither sings, nor frets, nor laughs—he only smokes. When he comes near a narrow defile, he sounds his trumpet to prevent any carriage from entering the other end till he is got through. If you call to him to go faster, he will turn about, look you in the face, take his pipe from his mouth and say *Ya mynheer*, and then proceed exactly on the same pacc as before. He is no way affected whether the road be good or bad, whether it rains, shines, or snows; and he seems to be totally regardless of the people whom he drives, and equally callous to their reproach or applause. He has one object of which he never loses sight, which is to conduct your chaise and its contents from one post to another, in the manner in which he thinks best for himself and his horses; and unless his pipe goes out, in which case he strikes his flint and rekindles it, he seems not to have another idea during the whole journey. Mr. H. told us of a gentleman travelling, the pole of whose chaise happened to break late at night, in a very narrow road through which it was impossible for his servant on horseback to pass.¹ The postillion went in quest of another, but did not think proper to return till

¹ No doubt Miss Hill meant to say he could not pass the vehicle by which the narrow road was blockaded.

the next morning. The only apology he made was that he went to bed, to sleep."

At Spa, Miss Hill and her companions received great civilities from the Capuchins. She describes their dress as very strange and peculiar. "A long gown of the coarsest brown cloth, tied round with a rope which hangs to their ancles, and being knotted at the ends, they chastise themselves with it, some without mercy, others, *wisely*, with moderation. From the waist hangs a long bunch of beads or rosary, with a cross. They have a kind of short cloak over their shoulders of coarse material, but no shirts, neither shoes, nor stockings, only a kind of wooden sandals buckled with a strap round their feet, which are usually very dirty. The hair is entirely shaved off their heads, except a very small tuft on the forehead. The crown is quite bare. The beards of those who are ordained priests, hang down to their girdles. Upon the whole they make a venerable and strange appearance. We were honoured with their particular attention: frequently they sent us presents of nosegays out of their gardens, in which we had liberty to walk whenever we pleased." Miss Hill and a friend went to hear one of them preach, and could not help contrasting the solemnity of the sermon and worship, with what they witnessed at the English service in the house of a diplomatist of her own nation. She says, "Lord —— officiated as clerk, and the whole congregation, which consisted of a circle of ladies and gentlemen round the room, was in a constant titter." It was alas, an awful specimen of times passed away; but there are too many of our countrymen yet, who have to learn the important lesson of consistent conduct in foreign countries.

Miss Hill has entered in her lively record of this

journey, the following curious anecdote. A lady of gay disposition, and who out of pleasantry put on a religious habit, laid hold of a little scourge which hung at the belt of one of the Capuehin fathers, and desired him to make her a present of it, assuring him she wished to use it by way of doing penance on her return home. The father with great gravity begged she would spare her own fair person, and promised her he would give himself a hearty flogging on her account that very evening. To prove how much he was in earnest, he fell directly on his knees before a little altar, and began to whip his own shoulders with unsparing hand, and declared that when the lady retired, he would lay the scourge with equal violence on his naked body, till she was as free from sin as on the day of her birth. The lady was so melted by his conduct, that she begged him to take no more of her faults on his shoulders, for she was convinced what he had already done would clear her as completely as if he whipped himself to the bone! This story brings to mind that of the celebrated Dominic, the euirassier, who was enabled *miraculously* to flog himself thousands of strokes in a minute, that he might have a bank-stoek of penances at the service of all who chose to purchase them. Sure it is, that the more Popery becomes known to us, the more strongly we perceive that error is never so absurd and dangerous, as when it offers itself in the garb of perverted truth.

After seeing various other interesting sights in the countries they visited, Miss Hill and her fellow-travellers proceeded from Brussels to Paris, and thence to Versailles. As every thing relating to the then brilliant, but soon afterwards clouded and miserable court of France, cannot fail to awaken a mournful interest, the account of their admission to the palace shall close this notice of

Miss Hill's journal. The day they passed within its walls was that of the festival of All Saints. "The king and queen attended high mass, which was most grand and magnificent. A duchess begged with a purse in her hand, from all the noblesse for the poor. She was dressed in all the pride of life, as were all the ladies in her Majesty's suite. The queen herself had on a *negligée* of a black satin ground flowered in colours. Her head was finely dressed with wreaths of artificial flowers, entwined with a number of jewels; her lappets were of black lacc, which likewise distinguished the ladies of her court. She is in general reckoned beautiful, but she did not at all strike me in that light; her person and face are *dollish*, though she has a sharp wanton look. She appeared affable and good-humoured, and talked to those about her. Mass being ended, their Majesties, or rather his Majesty, dined in public. I had the honour to stand close to them. Two courses of seven things each, some removes, and a dessert composed the dinner. The king ate heartily, but the queen did not touch a morsel: she retired to a more comfortable meal afterwards. The king has a countenance of all others the most vacant and bloated. He is fat and very awkward—quite destitute of the graces. Not so his brothers and sisters, who are elegant and fashionable in their appearance. During the time of the dinner, the noblesse and other persons of fashion pass by their Majesties and pay their respects. The queen's behaviour was easy and polite, that of the king, stiff and formal. His Majesty was dressed in pompadour velvet richly embroidered with silver, and had two stars on his breast composed of diamonds of surprising lustre; but all this could not set off his inelegant person." The poor ill-fated queen addressed a few civil words to Miss Hill,

who then little thought of the sobs and groans that ere long were to stifle her gentle voice, or that the dungeons of the Temple and the horrors of the scaffold, were to succeed to the luxurious chambers of the Petit Trianon, and the splendid luxury of the finest palace in the world.

While Miss Hill was in Paris, she was extremely anxious to collect authentic particulars respecting Voltaire. She translated from the French, with remarks of her own, a very interesting account of this depraved infidel. At Paris, she met with an individual who was able to authenticate some of the facts she collected, respecting the despair which gathered like a thunder-cloud around his dark and awful end. These she desired to record, not in the way of contemptuous triumph, but of Christian pity ; that they might become a warning to those who hate the only light, that can comfort and guide in the gloomy vale of the shadow of death. Infidelity may repose in apparent security for a time, but it generates a whirlwind that will inevitably sweep away all it has nurtured, and leave nothing but ruin behind. War, pestilence, and famine, produce less injurious effects than such libertinism, materialism, and depravity, as the wit and talent of Voltaire gave him the dreadful power to scatter over the surface of Europe.

This enemy of his species is described ¹ in the manuscript of Miss Hill, as having been, in person, rather under the common size, of a spare figure and dry constitution, with a hot choleric disposition. His features were small and thin, capable of a sprightly, caustic,

¹ His appearance and character were thus described by a French writer, whose words were translated by Miss Hill. What I have given, is a mere summary of her narrative, with occasional extracts. The principal facts are well known to the world.

waspish air. His eyes were sparkling and severe, indicating all the fire that flashes through his works. He was quick even to rashness, and his genius was formed to dazzle. "Gay by nature, serious by regimen, open without frankness, politic without artifice, sociable without friends; he knew the world and forgot it. He was Aristippus in a morning, Diogenes at night. He loved grandeur, and despised the great; with them he was easy, but reserved among his equals. He began with politeness, continued with coldness, and ended with disgust. He loved the court, and was weary of it. Tender without attachment, voluptuous without passion, he kept to nothing by choice, and to every thing by fickleness. Reasoning without principle, he had fits of reason like the madness of other people; and having a strong genius and a deceitful heart, he saw through everything and made a jest of everything. Vain to excess, but still more covetous, he laboured less for reputation than for money. He was formed for enjoyment, but would heap up wealth." Such was Voltaire, the author, the philosopher, the infidel, who rioted in the licentiousness of wicked talent, and who was led by the torch of his own genius, which despised the lamp of truth, through scenes of deceitful gaiety and splendour, till the hour of death found him with his light gone out, in the dungeon of deep despair.

He was born at Paris in 1694, and it is said that his father was admired for his wit, and respected for his probity. The precocious talent of his son gave him no pleasure: for his earliest efforts indicated not only the sparkling of genius, but the glare of impiety. His first productions when a child were licentious rhymes; and at the school of Louis le Grand, he was encouraged by his fellow-students to give the reins to his worst pas-

sions and most deadly principles. The professor of rhetoric said of him, "That boy will be the champion of the infidels," a prediction too speedily fulfilled; for scarcely had he left the college, than he became chief of the *philosophic* sects. His career is too well known. He gloried in the name of *Deist*, upon which he engrafted such a string of disgusting evils, that the wonder is he could find in civilized life a single partizan. He met with some rebuffs, which Rousseau¹ thinks would have been sufficient to correct him, had he been susceptible of any correction. For examples: a beating from an old man in the dressing-room of the theatre; a sabre cut from an officer he had libelled, on the bridge of Sevres; imprisonment in the Bastille; hisses in public, and other contemptuous treatment, which only increased his impudence and rage. He became intimate with the King of Prussia, and at last insulted him, and lost his protection. He fixed his residence at length on the borders of the lake of Geneva, but was driven thence by the republic for his impieties, and retired to Ferney. There he continued his iniquitous writings, till checked by the hand of Providence, he was obliged to lay aside his pen, and then he affected to declare his reverence for the Roman Catholic religion!

It is stated in the manuscript of Miss Hill, that during the years 1768 and 1769, all the newspapers were full of the retractions, confessions, and communions of Voltaire. Such, however, was his conduct, that the Catholics themselves were more scandalized than gratified, by these marks of his favour towards their religion. On Easter Day, 1768, he attended the church at Ferney, and after having received the communion, addressed a

¹ One of the most remarkable incidents in his life was his quarrel with Rousseau.

most unsatisfactory discourse to the people on theft and robbery. The public was rather indignant at all he did than propitiated by it; and the Bishop of Annecy wrote him a letter to this effect, with many such exhortations as a pastor of the Romish Church would be likely to give. In reply, Voltaire expressed extreme surprise, and boasted of having actually, in proof of his sincerity, erected a church; he also praised himself in no measured terms for his benevolence to his tenants, and vindicated his address upon the ground of his right as a "Lord of the parish." The Bishop answered him with the assurance, that the Protestants were quite as displeased with him as the Catholics; and told him he must give much stronger evidence than he had done, of sincere sorrow for his scandalous writings and behaviour, before he could be *absolved* by him or again be admitted to "the holy table." He likewise refuted his pretended right as "a Lord," to preach in the church, and added some strong remarks on the difference "between a soul devoted to true religion, and a soul led away by the vain glory of false philosophy." At length Voltaire professed to be moved by the Bishop's earnest remonstrances, and declared his readiness to "conform to his duty." He was drawn to church on the "holy day of *the Boughs Sunday*;"¹ but finding himself unable to go again, he addressed a memorial to the Curate of Ferney, entreat- ing him to do on his behalf "all that the ordinances of the King and the decrees of Parliament jointly command, with the canons of the Catholic Church professed in the kingdom." Moreover, he declared that in this religion he "was born, *had lived*, and would die." He offered, in addition, to make all necessary declarations, protes-

¹ Palm Sunday.

tations, &c., whatever they might be, and this as well for the benefit of the Catholics as the Protestants of his house. This memorial is said to have been signed by him in the presence of two witnesses, named Biger and Vagniere, on the third of March, 1769. Afterwards at the Chateau de Ferney, he made what is called his declaration, which commenced in this pompous strain—"Monsieur Francois Marie de Voltaire, gentleman in ordinary of the King's chamber, one of the forty at the French Academy, Lord of Ferney, Tourneux, Pregny, and Chambese, &c. &c.," owes "*to truth, to his honour, and his piety*, the declaration that he *has never* been wanting in respect to, or in practising the Catholic religion, and that he forgives his calumniators." But lest this monstrous assertion should make the hairs of all readers to stand on end with astonishment, he craftily stated that "*if ever any indiscretion escaped him* prejudicial to the religion of the country, he asked pardon of God and the state." The Curate of Ferney administered the communion to him in his bed, and he is reported to have pronounced these words—"Having God in my mouth, I declare that I sincerely pardon all those who have written calumnies of me to the King, and who have not succeeded in their wicked designs." He also made a confession of faith in unison with the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church, particularly acknowledging that *to it alone belonged to judge of the true sense of Scripture*, and condemning all other interpretations!

Such, according to the account in Miss Hill's manuscript, were the proceedings of Voltaire during his illness at Ferney. At length, tired of his solitude, where his pride had experienced such bitter humiliation, he sought a last retreat in the capital of France, in the month of February, 1778. There he met with a reception which,

if it could not cheer his miserable old age, was at least calculated to efface all regret at departure from the scene of his impious writings and hypocritical professions. The whole literary world at Paris was moved by the rumour of his coming. The poets were eager to do him homage; and it is reported that he was wicked enough to return it with the grossly flattering and impious words, "I live only *by* you and *for* you." He became the idol of all the wits of the city, so that it was thought a great thing to be able to say, "I have seen him; he has spoken to me." But he had the mortification of being refused a reception at Court, one of the most becoming determinations ever resolved upon by the King and Queen, in the plenitude of their grandeur at Versailles. Upon this, the vain tribe of philosophers conducted an actor to his lodgings, habited in a character, to place upon his head a crown, which the nation's gratitude had set upon that of the illustrious Prince of Condé. Not content with this violent indiscretion, whereby the history of those men is indelibly tarnished and their delirium exposed, they must next call upon the old dupe of their flattery to become a Freemason. But these vain laurels were soon converted into garlands of the grave, and the forced smiles and compliments with which the aged libertine received them, into expressions of bitter agony and groans of horror at the approach of the pains of death, and the prospects of judgment. A fatal disease quickly followed the excitements of his decrepid frame, and terminated his wretched career. At this crisis he was visited by the Abbè Gaultier, who introduced himself to his notice in the following offer of waiting on him at the house of the Marquis de Villette, where he was entertained :—

“ Many persons, Monsieur, admire you. I desire from the bottom of my heart to be of the number. I might have that advantage if you pleased ; and that depends upon yourself. Yet there is time. I would say more to you, if you permit me to wait on you. Although I am the most unworthy of all ministers, I will nevertheless say nothing to you that shall be unworthy of my Ministry, or than what ought to give you pleasure. Though I dare not flatter myself that you will permit me so great a happiness, I shall not on that account forget you at the holy sacrifice of the Mass ; and I shall pray with the greatest fervour I am capable of, to the just and merciful God for the salvation of your immortal soul, which is perhaps on the point of being judged for all its actions. Pardon, Sir, the liberty I take in writing to you. My intention is to do you the greatest of services. I can do it with the help of Him who chooses the weak to confound the wise. I shall think myself happy if your answer is agreeable to the sentiments with which

I am, &c.,

GAULTIER, Pretre.

Paris, Feb. 20, 1778.

There is much of honesty in this letter; and it is only to be lamented that a mind like that of the writer, when he desired the end he professed to have in view, should have been under a veil as to the instrumentality of the only means whereby a sinner—yea, even such a one as Voltaire—can be brought to sincere contrition. However, his note was met by an answer.

“ Your letter, Monsieur, appears to be that of an honest man, and this is sufficient to determine me to re-

ceive the honour of your visit, the day and hour which you like to appoint. I shall tell you the same thing I did in giving a blessing to the little son of the illustrious and wise Franklin, the most respectable man in America. I pronounced these words—*God and liberty*. All the attendants shed tears of commiseration. I flatter myself you are in the same sentiments. I am eighty-four years of age, and am soon to appear before God, the Creator of all the worlds. If you have anything to say to me, I shall think it my duty, and an honour to receive your visit, notwithstanding the sufferings I endure.

I have the honour to be, &c.

VOLTAIRE.

Paris, Feb. 21, 1778.

On the receipt of this absurd note, the Abbé Gaultier immediately went to Voltaire, and on the very day of its date, he found himself in the chamber of the aged enemy of revelation. There were in the apartment several persons who desired to speak to him; but he permitted them to remain only two or three minutes, declaring how much he suffered, and that to say the truth, he was unfit to receive any body. When these visitors retired, he became extremely courteous to the Abbé, whom he took by the hand and led into an inner room. There he requested him to be seated, and placing himself by his side, inquired what it was he came to say. The Abbé commenced with assuring him, that the desire of knowing a man of such celebrity, and of being serviceable to him as a minister of religion, induced him to solicit permission to pay his duty to Monsieur Voltaire. He then mentioned that though he had not the honour of his personal acquaintance, he was well known to one of his friends who had favoured him with confidence.

Of this gentleman, Monsieur de Lattagnant, he was happy to report, that age and infirmities had brought him to suitable reflections on his past life ; and he urged upon Voltaire the same duty. “ If, Monsieur,” he also added, “ my ministry be agreeable to you, you have only to speak, and I shall conform myself to your wishes. I am not the only one in Paris who can do you that service. You have a choice before you. You will find many more worthy than I am, ready to be of use to you.” Voltaire listened with polite attention ; but the instant the Abbé ceased, he inquired with earnestness whether his coming originated with himself or was suggested by others. The Abbé replied that it was entirely his own doing. “ What,” he said, “ did not the archbishop nor the curé de St. Sulpice advise you ?” His visitor repeated his declaration that no person had urged him to attend on him ; and observed that if his presence were not agreeable, he depended on his indulgence, but if it was, he desired to bless God for it. “ I am delighted,” said Voltaire, “ that you were not sent here by any body ; and now pray what have you been, and what are you ?” The Abbé answered that he was for seventeen years a Jesuit, and that he had been nearly twenty years a curé in the diocese of Rouen, but was then employed at Paris. Voltaire immediately made offers of worldly services and rewards for his attention. The Abbé declined them with the remark, “ Ah ! Monsieur, my great reward would be to have you for my conquest.” He likewise told him that a merciful God would not have him lost, and said with earnestness, “ return to Him, since he returns to you.” Voltaire appeared touched with these words, and rejoined, “ I love God.” The Abbé told him that was much, but if his love were sincere, he would be ready to give proofs of it.

The Abbé was frequently interrupted by the impatience of Voltaire's friends. "Make an end," said one of them,¹ "you see that Monsieur Voltaire vomits blood, and is not in a condition to speak." Voltaire smartly answered, "Ah Monsieur, leave me if you please with my friend the Abbé Gaultier; he does not flatter me." Madame Denis came in at the end of three quarters of an hour, and spoke gently—"Monsieur l'Abbé, my unele will be much fatigued; be so kind as to come again another time." He then retired, asking permission to repeat his attendance, which was readily granted, and departed with the words, "Adieu, Monsieur Voltaire; I believe you have not a more sincere friend in the world than I am." Thus ended this extraordinary interview, and the Abbé proceeded to give an account of it to the archbishop of Paris and the curé de St. Sulpice.

He heard no more of Voltaire till the 26th of February, when he received a note to this effect: "You promised, Monsieur, to come and hear what I had to say; I desire you will give yourself the trouble to come as soon as you can." It was late in the evening when this invitation reached him, but the request was repeated the next morning by Madame Denis. He accordingly attended at the house of the Marquis de Villette, but he did not see Voltaire. He was told that the curé de St. Sulpice was come to urge him to confession, but that he had said all his confidence was in the Abbé. On the second of March he went again, and before he entered the apartment of Voltaire, was warned not to be alarmed, as he was vomiting blood, and to speak mildly. The Marechal de Richelieu came out, and begged the

¹ It appears that D'Alembert and Diderot were of this party, and treated the Abbé with contempt.

Abbé not to neglect him. He promised to do his best. On his entering the chamber, Voltaire seized him by the hand, and desired that he would confess him before he died. The Abbé replied that he had spoken to the curé de St. Sulpice, whose parishioner Voltaire was, and had received permission to do so, but that he must make retractation before confession. This he offered to write himself, and called for pen and ink. When they were brought, he desired all to retire that he might be left alone with the Abbé Gaultier. The Abbé asserted that he then wrote with his own hand—"I, underwritten, declare, that being attacked four months since with a vomiting of blood, at the age of fourscore and four years, and not being able to drag myself to church, Monsieur le curé de St. Sulpice being glad to add to his good works, that of sending Monsieur l'Abbé Gaultier the priest to me—I confess myself to him, and if God take me, I die in the Catholic religion in which I was born, hoping in the divine mercy for pardon of all my faults; and if I have ever brought scandal on the Church, I ask pardon of God and her." Witnesses were called in to hear this retractation read, and to sign it. Voltaire then also wrote—"M. l'Abbé Gaultier having given me notice, that they say in a certain world, I shall protest against all that I do at my death; I declare that I never had such intentions, and that it is an *ancient pleasantry* attributed a long time ago very falsely, to several scholars more enlightened than VOLTAIRE."

He then handed the Abbé his retractation, and said, "You are going no doubt to insert it in the journals: I have no objection." The Abbé replied, "It is yet too soon." "Are you satisfied?" asked Voltaire. The answer was, "It does not appear sufficient; but I will communicate it to the Archbishop of Paris." Upon

seeing it, he did not approve it, neither did the curé de St. Sulpice, to whom it was also carried, although Voltaire sent him a large sum of money to distribute to the poor.¹ The Abbé returned to the house of the Marquis de Villette, to endeavour to obtain a less equivocal document, but was told by the *Suisse* he could not be admitted. On this he wrote to Voltaire, and received for answer that the master of the house had forbidden entrance to any ecclesiastic except the curé de St. Sulpice; but that when the sick man had recovered his health a little, he would be happy to see Monsieur l'Abbé Gaultier. This reply was signed "de Voltaire," and dated "Paris, March 15." He somewhat revived, but the promise was not kept. On hearing this, the Abbé applied with great urgency by letter to be allowed an interview. Voltaire sent his nephew Monsieur l'Abbé Mignot to call on Monsieur Gaultier, and to say that his uncle would confess to nobody but him. He promised to confess him, upon condition that he signed a retraction drawn up by himself. The Abbé Mignot undertook to make Voltaire sign it, and to have it inserted in all the journals and newspapers in Europe. The Abbé Gaultier then went to him and found him delirious, the effect probably of the large doses of opium he is reported to have taken. Of course the Abbé mentioned nothing of his errand; and three hours after he went away, Voltaire died.

These particulars I have gathered from a communication said to have been made by the Abbé Gaultier, officially, to the Archbishop of Paris, which was translated by Miss Hill. During the time the Abbé was refused

¹ The account given by the Abbé Gaultier has been frequently adverted to in other publications; therefore I have not introduced the narrative into this work.

admission to the chamber of Voltaire, he was suffering under the agonies of despair, which overwhelmed him as he saw death approaching, and which his attendants vainly endeavoured to subdue by strong soporifics.

As soon as the death of Voltaire became known, the Archbishop forbade his body to be interred in consecrated ground, and prevailed, although efforts were made to obtain superior orders against the prelate. At length his corpse, it is said, became an object of infection and horror, and was taken by stealth from Paris. It was pretended by the conductors that they were going to carry him to Ferney, but they went to Sellieres in Champagne, where M. Mignot his nephew, who was commendatory abbé, received a feigned report that his uncle had died in a very Christian manner on the road. The Bishop of Troyes, informed of this manœuvre, sent immediately to forbid the funeral, but his order did not arrive till the prior had finished the ceremony. They agreed that the body should not be disinterred, but the Archbishop put an interdict on the chapel where it was deposited, and the prior was greatly censured by the generality of his order.

This fact is derived from the manuscript of Miss Hill, which also states that the *philosophers*, not being able to procure funeral honours for their chief, undertook to celebrate his obsequies on the stage by the representation of the tragedy of Mahomed, at which they proposed to assist in deep mourning; but the police being apprised of the project, put an end to it. The irritated comedians endeavoured to suspend the theatrical performances for three days, but the authorities sent them an order to perform as usual. Other efforts were made by them to do honour to the memory of their leader, but all were frustrated.

The end of Voltaire was horrible in the extreme. After the curate of St. Sulpice and the Abbé Gaultier had left the room, M. Tronchin his physician found him in frightful agitations, and crying out in despair, "I am abandoned of God and man." In a state of frenzied agony, he actually degraded his very nature by fulfilling in his own person, the spirit of a prophecy of Ezekiel¹ which he had often ridiculed with his bitterest sarcasms. M. Tronchin related this to several respectable persons, and remarked to them, "I wish all those who have been seduced by Voltaire's books, had been witnesses of his death; they could not have held out against such a sight."

Thus departed the infidel libertine from a world he had endeavoured to corrupt. For sixty long years, he was the enemy of men and their Saviour, seeking only his own glory, and looking with an eye of hateful jealousy on the fame of others. His principles afforded him no resting place of body or mind; he could find peace and tranquillity neither at Paris, nor Nancy, nor in England, Holland, Prussia, nor Switzerland; and at last ended a turbulent career by a disturbed old age and a miserable death. The cloud which gathered over him in his dying struggle, thickened in its blackness as he sought a vain refuge in empty ceremonies, that can give no real comfort to the soul of man. He seized with the eagerness of a wanton child upon every toy that came within his reach, till he broke it and cast the fragments away in unsatisfied disgust. He would be a man of universal letters; he would be rich; he would be noble; he attained all, and found pleasure in none. Every draught of ambition was poisoned by the gall of

¹ Ezekiel iv. 12.

his own bitter spirit, which had no corrective within itself. In his madness he once erected his own tomb by the side of the church facing his house, and placed upon the altar a figure of gilt wood supposed to be meant for *himself*; for he had entertained the idea of making a religion of his own. History only preserves his memory as a lesson to proud unbelieving philosophers, despicable apostates, and enemies of Christianity, who can be terrified by it even in a perverted form, as he was by popery, in his latter end. His changes were most extraordinary. In 1760, he professed himself a Catholic, and heard mass at the midnight of Christmas; in 1766, he wrote a pagan ode on the death of the dauphin, accompanied with a tissue of ludicrous and impious libels; in 1768, he again confessed to Father Adam as a papist; and in 1769, he wrote the history of Louis XV. which he filled with the essence of infidelity and libertinism. His mad hatred of Christianity manifested itself in many ways. One day after dinner, he sent for all his servants to come in to him separately, and inquired of them whether they were Christians. To every one who answered in the negative he gave a glass of wine, and threatened to turn out of doors the only one who had the honesty to avow himself a believer. Fools alone, who make a mock at sin, can have any pleasure in the career of Voltaire, or look at the tomb where he lies without horror. Well did an old woman at Sellieres, say to one who asked earnestly for his grave, "There Sir, he lies: you are not the only fool from Paris, who has been here to see the tomb of that wicked man."

Miss Hill, whose life was spent in the happy enjoyment of true piety, made anxious inquiries as to the end of this dreadful enemy of religion, in order to confirm the

assurance she always expressed, that the strongest infidelity must yield before the terrors of approaching dissolution. Though many accounts have been given of the end of Voltaire, I could not refrain from making some use of these remains of the excellent sister of Sir Richard Hill, trusting that should they meet the eye of any unbeliever, they may lead him to seek refuge in that hope, which was the comfort and the spring of usefulness both of herself and of her brother. Moreover, we have in the facts here recorded, a proof, if any such be needed, of the impossibility of returning to God through the medium of formal observances and carnal mummeries ; and that there is no repentance and no assured sense of pardon, but in those who are led to the Saviour with that contrition which compels them to cry out, not only for mercy, but also for a clean heart, and the renewal of a right spirit within them.

CHAPTER XVI.

SIR RICHARD HILL VISITS SICILY AND CALABRIA. MOTLEY GROUP OF VOYAGERS. MURDERER. PRINCE CARAMANICO. VAULT OF THE CAPUCHINS. COACHES AND SPLENDOUR. ASSASSINATIONS. FILTHY INN. LETTER OF SIR RICHARD HILL TO MR. AND MRS. ROWLAND HILL. LITIGA. KING OF SICILY AND HIS AMUSEMENTS. SICILIAN LANDLADY. PALACE OF PRINCE PALAGONIA. ST. MARTIN'S CONVENT, AND DINNER. EARTHQUAKES. THE BARON MILOCO. ALARMS. LAST DAY OF THE MESSINA CARNIVAL. CALABRIA. BANDITTI. LENT. SAILOR PRIEST. NEWS AT SALERNO. HOLY WEEK AT ROME IN 1791, DURING A VISIT FROM THE KING AND QUEEN OF NAPLES, AND THE MESDAMES OF FRANCE. PUBLIC OSCULATIONS OF POPE PIUS VI.

VOYAGE FROM NAPLES TO PALERMO.

IN the year 1791, Sir Richard Hill, accompanied by his brother, the Rev. Brian Hill, made a tour through Sicily and Calabria, and spent the holy week at Rome. Mr. Brian Hill published an account of this journey at the earnest desire of many friends; and I possess an interleaved copy of that work, with manuscript additions by Sir Richard. The travellers left Naples on the last day of January, and arrived at Palermo in twenty-five hours. Their vessel contained as motley a group of voyagers as ever was assembled in one place; for besides themselves and the crew, consisting of Italians

and Sclavonians, there were two priests, a woman and a child, an Irishman, a Welchman, a Frenchman, a madman, and a murderer, who, after killing a female at Palermo, had fled to Naples, whence he was brought back to be hung in chains. Justice was more rigorously administered in those days at Palermo than at Naples, for Sir William Hamilton told them, that though the King of Naples lost four, and sometimes six thousand subjects a year by assassinations, there had taken place but two executions in twelve years. The scenery, the fruits, the produce of Sicily are now known to most European travellers, as is also the flavour of the sweetmeats sold at Palermo; but in those days, the best were to be purchased only from the nuns, who, Sir Richard Hill said, were "glad of every opportunity of getting a little chit chat, especially with strangers."

Sir Richard Hill and his companions were noticed at Palermo by Prince Caramanico, Viceroy of Sicily, to whom they carried a letter of introduction from Sir William Hamilton. The Prince had resided some time in England as Ambassador; and besides being Viceroy at Palermo, he was a legate *a latere* from the Pope, which gave him the privilege of a fine canopy in the royal chapel, and the assistance of the sacred council. His style of living was extremely magnificent, and his manners were affable and easy. The travellers dined with him the day after their arrival, when he gave place to Sir Richard Hill as a British Senator, but walked before all his other guests. He presented his company with iced punch and English porter, as great rarities, and had a fire in an English fire-place in one of his rooms, which contained probably the only chimney in the island.

In a convent of Capuchins, they visited a curious vault used as a receptacle for the dead. It consisted of four

wide passages, each about forty feet long, with windows at the ends ; and in these the bodies were placed erect, clothed in coarse garments, with their heads, arms, and feet bare. They were prepared for this situation by being broiled over a slow fire on a sort of gridiron, till all fat and moisture was gone, and the skin only left, with an appearance of pale coloured leather. The character of the countenance was but slightly preserved. On the floor were handsome coffins, containing the bodies of persons of distinction, the keys of which were kept by their relations.

Palermo could boast in those days of at least a thousand splendid equipages of the Sicilian aristocracy ; and as it was not etiquette for any gentleman to walk in the streets, immense expense was lavished on them. Every evening, all people of rank drove out on the grand public terrace by the sea side ; and Hyde Park in its glory could not shew as gaudy an exhibition of trappings and horses. On every carriage stood as many footmen in the most costly liveries, as could crowd on behind, these displays being the pride of the place. The consequence was that the tailors flourished incredibly, and their numbers were immense. The dresses of the ladies were exceedingly magnificent, and in good taste, but their morals were detestable ; for it was extremely ungentle for any one of them to be seen abroad with her husband, or without her *cicisbeo*. Much of this laxity was considered to arise out of the spirit of Popery, whose first object being to keep up the authority of the Church, absolved immorality much sooner than the neglect of an *ave-maria* or eating flesh on a fast day.

But Sir Richard Hill and his companions were most horrified by the perpetual assassinations, particularly at Naples and Rome, where there was no energy in

the laws to put them down, and where the commutation of punishment for money, and the asylum afforded by the sanctuary, actually offered facilities of escape to the murderer. At the places just named, the hospitals for the stabbed were generally full both of men and women, and no efforts were made to prevent every person carrying a stiletto. Sir Richard Hill bought one "much ornamented, and of elegant make. It had three sharp triangular edges, like a prism. The vender said it was *for the use of ladies* who might want a weapon of that sort." In Rome the following conversation took place between Sir Richard and his *lacquais de place*.

Sir R. H. Francesco, have there been any persons stabbed to-day?

Francesco. Certainly some, but not so many as in the holidays of the last week, or as there will be on Sunday.

Sir R. H. Why so?

Francesco. Because to-day is not a festival, and the usual time for stabbing is when quarrels arise among the people, who are assembled to make merry and drink together.

Sir Richard Hill was himself witness of some of these execrable murders; and a few days before he left Rome, an English gentleman's coachman happening to have some words with an under cook of the hotel, the fellow ran into the kitchen for the great knife, and instantly cut him across the body, so that he died the next day. It was said that he had been stabbed slightly, thirty times before. The cook was sent to prison; but if he could raise sufficient money, it was supposed he would escape.

On the 5th of February, Sir Richard Hill and his party

paid a second visit to Prince Caramanico, who received them very graciously, but like a sovereign prince motioned them to withdraw when he chose to put an end to the interview. This day was the anniversary of the great earthquake, which eight years before destroyed Messina and the adjacent places, and swallowed up no less than forty-five thousand human beings. Sir Richard Hill's own lodgings were in sad contrast to the splendid apartments of his princely friend. Palermo could boast of no hotel, and all the English travellers could get, was a small room in a most filthy inn, covered with cobwebs, having only one window, and that out of repair. It was as dirty as possible; the greater part of it was occupied by two most wretched beds, and the remaining space by three chairs and a table, on which they ate their meals. The cost was in an inverse ratio to the accommodation, for they were charged for this and another worse room, full three guineas and a half a week, and about five shillings a piece for a dinner, which no appetites but those of hungry tourists could well have brooked.

A letter of Sir Richard Hill, dated Feb. 7, to Mr. Rowland Hill and Mrs. Hill¹ gives an amusing account of his journey. After a few prefatory remarks he proceeds:—

“Now for some account of the travellers, with whom you must take a long and sudden leap from England to Loretto in Italy, where we arrived on the 11th of December, and though but a small place, we found an incredible assemblage of people, it being the time of celebration of the festival in honour of the removal of the *santa casa*, or holy house, which festival was to last three days.

¹ This letter I found amongst the papers of Mr. Rowland Hill.

“ As this most ridiculous of all ridiculous stories may not have reached you, I will relate the account they give of it at Loretto as briefly as possible.

“ When the Turks first got possession of the Holy Land, angels carried the house in which the Virgin Mary lived, from Judea into Dalmatia, and left it for a few years ; but the Dalmatians not shewing the house that respect which was due to it, the angels came again, carried it across the Adriatic, and left it at Loretto, which stands upon a hill about three miles from the sea. Here it remained till about three hundred years ago, when the Virgin Mary appeared to some holy man in his sleep, and informed him of the miracle. He told the story to others, and the wonder was made known to the Pope, who ordered a magnificent church to be built over the house, in which church it now stands ; and the greatest festival in the Roman Calendar, and which is marked in all their almanacs, is the translation of the holy house. The image of the Virgin, which they have stuck up in it, is quite black, as is that of the *bambino*, or holy child Jesus, which she holds in her arms ; but both the one and the other are covered all over with diamonds, pearls, and precious stones. The numerous lamps, and indeed almost all the inside of the house, from the altar to the place where the Virgin stands, and behind her, are of solid massy gold ; but the great chamber of treasure offered to the image by the folly and superstition of different Kings and Queens, among whom the bigoted Mary of England makes a conspicuous figure, surpasses all description or even imagination. A priest shewed us the window through which the angel Gabriel fled to announce the Virgin, the porringer out of which she ate, and the chimney at which she warmed herself ! To commemorate this nonsensical tale, the Bishop of the

diocese, all the prebends and canons, with other priests without number, were gathered together, arrayed in vestments of gaudy flowered silk, richly laced, and embroidered all over with gold and silver. High mass was celebrated with peculiar pomp, most of the first voices and musicians being collected out of different parts of the Pope's dominions; the people of fashion were all in gala, or full dress, the whole town was illuminated, and most magnificent fireworks displayed. But in the middle of the night, or rather about two in the morning, the hour in which they tell you the holy house arrived, I really thought our miserable old inn would have fallen about our ears; and indeed I believe the walls gave way and the floor sunk. Such a loud discharge of immense cannon for a whole hour together, surely never was heard. The next day the same rejoicings were repeated, and we were assured were much more splendid, but we were glad to escape with a whole skin, and to leave Loretto and the holy house, pursuing our route to the once great mistress of the world.

“ On the 14th of December, about noon, we reached Rome. The very day of our arrival we went to St. Peter's Church, and had been there about an hour when his Holiness entered, with two or three attendants. He immediately walked up to a brazen statue, which goes by the name of St. Peter, though by the *toga* or gown, it is plainly the figure of a Roman consul. To this figure did the blessed Father repeatedly make the lowest obeisance that his old body could stoop to; he then kissed the feet of the image, and rubbed his head against them just like a purring cat when she is pleased, then kissed and bowed, and bowed and kissed again. When this farce was over, some poor people ran with eagerness to catch the warmth of the holy salute, and began

kissing the plaees which had so lately felt the pressure of the sanetified lip of Pope Pius the Sixth. After a few more childish ceremonies the Man of Sin left St. Peter's, and got into his earriage, which was waiting at the door with four mules, to take him out an airing.

“ Our stay at Rome was only about ten days, intending to make a longer abode there on our return.

“ From Rome we proeeded to Naples, and after having staid there five weeks, and having seen Vesuvius and every thing worthy of notiee in and about that delightful city, we took ship for Sicily and reached Palermo, the eapital of the island, after a very fine passage of about twenty-four hours, with a pretty high sea. The distance from Naples to Palermo is rather more than a hundred and eighty miles. We spent about a week at Palermo, from whence we went to see the famous temple of Segesta, and on our return had letters of reeommendation from the Vieeroy of Sieily (who is in power and magnificence like our Lord Lieutenant of Ireland) to a Convent of Monks¹ who are all nobles. The monastery in which they live is an immense and a most magnificent palace, and the dinner they gave us was in a style eonsistent with their own rank and that of their habitation. A gentleman who went with us, told us they were all infidels, and that they were perpetually quarelling among themselves about riehes and power, and that their animosities ran so high, that one half of them would never speak or eat with the other half. Yet are they saying masses and keeping up all the parade of Popish trumpery from morning till night; and so very strict are their rules, that not a woman may approach even the outer court of their temple; though not above a month ago, an opera

¹ San Martino.

girl was discovered in man's clothes in one of the apartments !

“ We left Palermo on Thursday last, the 17th, (by the bye you will see how long ago I had begun my letter) and arrived at Messina yesterday evening, viz. Tuesday the 23rd, and are now eye-witnesses of the dreadful havoc made here by the earthquake just eight years since. Oh what an awful sight ! Whole streets, palaces, churches, and sumptuous buildings all thrown down and now lying in ruins ! The number of the persons killed in Messina and its environs, and on the opposite coast of Calabria, amounted to about forty thousand in all. They are rebuilding the city with vigour and splendour, though seldom a month together without having two or three shocks of the earth, the last of which was no longer ago than Friday last. Yesterday night our landlord came into the room, and desired we would go to bed and sleep without fear, as the house was built with reed, so that if it should be overturned in the night, there would be no danger of being killed. On Friday morning (D. V.) we shall leave this scene of desolation to visit Mount *Ætna* and Syracuse. To give you any account of what are called roads and inns in this country, would take up much more time and room than I can allot. In the latter, nothing is to be found but filth and vermin ; neither fire, candle, meat, bread, wine, in short nothing but what you bring with you, and dress yourself, with a gridiron and frying-pan, which we carry about with us. Yet the whole island abounds with everything ; corn, wine, oil, silk, and almost all the productions of the West Indies, manna trees, and lemon-trees, with hedges for miles together of Indian figs and aloes, which here blossom every five or six years. The common shrubs on the moun-

tains are myrtles, wild pomegranates, lavender, rosemary, and a multitude of plants which we cultivate with great care in hothouses. Turtles are found here in abundance : we bought one a few days ago for less than two shillings. Morris and I were cooks ; and really, considering our want of materials, it was not bad. I have no more room. God bless you. Pray for us. Send this to ——— and ———. Love to all.

Yours affectionately,

RICHARD HILL.

P. S. I have just place to add, that the mode of travelling here is in a kind of sedan-chair carried between two mules ; and the safest conductors are those who have belonged, or do belong, to some gang of robbers !”

Before Sir Richard Hill and his brother proceeded on their expedition, they heard the most alarming accounts of bad inns, and worse banditti ; but they were not persons to be daunted by such rumours, nor by the very uncomfortable mode of travelling to which they were obliged to submit. Their conveyance was called a *litiga*, a sort of sedan-coach supported by two poles and carried by mules. It had no glass in the windows, but thick curtains in case of rain, and the apertures they covered were the only entrances to the vehicle, which had no doors. Through these windows they were lifted out and in by their conductors. The sides were painted with all sorts of devices to act as charms against dangers. Among them were the virgin and child, saints in friars’ habits, and the souls in purgatory. One of their party being young and active, enjoyed the privilege of escaping the *litiga*, and travelled on horseback accompanied by servants, and a soldier with a gun and cutlass.

They were enchanted with the novel scenes through which they passed, and with the natural productions of a country, the character of which is now well known to every reader of modern travels. There were, however, abundant checks to their gratification in the shape of rooms without windows, mattresses of straw as hard as boards instead of beds, and legions of fleas which threatened to devour them. To add to their *comfort*, they were surrounded by starers on all sides, who followed them wherever they went. They found the old Doric temple at Segesta repaired in very bad taste by the king of Sicily. His *taste*, Sir Richard observed, was much more for *macaroni* than for architecture or antiquities. This luxury he was accustomed to devour in vast quantities, even with the *lazzaroni* in the streets, cramming it into his royal mouth with his fingers till it overflowed that capacious receptacle on either side. So fond was his Majesty of performing and seeing performed these *macaroni* operations, that he had pictures in his palace at Procita, of boys glutting themselves with it in the public places where it was purchased hot, ready-dressed, and very good, all day long. Next to this, his great delight was in shooting. The mode of his Majesty's *chasse* was much ridiculed by the English visitors ; though in fact it was nothing else but the same thing as a modern fashionable *battue*. Not long before the Hills arrived in his dominions, he had ordered all the cats at Procita to be killed, upon the pretence that they destroyed his pheasants ; and the bloody sentence was executed with such rigour, that the inhabitants were obliged to petition him to spare the feline race, as they were in as much danger from the rats, as the game was from cats. Sir Richard Hill and his companions were honoured with beds in the king's palace ; but to their surprise found

their bed-rooms on the ground floor, and the kitchen at the top of the house at least five stories high. The precincts of the royal chateau were by no means forbidden to intruders of the *pidocchi*, *cimici*, and *pulci da vero* species, who made most unpleasant bedfellows for the travellers, and probably often interfered with the royal repose. Besides pheasant shooting, the king often indulged himself with a *battue* of boars, and sometimes killed fifty or a hundred in a day, always registering his sport in a book, as our country gentlemen do now their lesser achievements in their "Game Book." When some of his dogs went mad, he caused his whole kennel to *hear mass*, and then put his hands in their mouths and declared no hurt could befall him or them! Besides his paintings of the *macaroni* eaters, his palace was hung with pictures of his hunting and shooting feats, in which his own figure was always prominent. His principal artist, Mr. Hackert, was, however, terribly fettered by his order, that all the colours should be bright and glaring without any kind of shade whatever! To do his Majesty justice he was, notwithstanding these foibles, idolized by his people, and invariably after an absence, he was met by thousands of his subjects who drew him without tumult or confusion, in triumph to his capital. Both himself and his queen also were most obliging to strangers.

The kind of entertainment the travellers had to put up with has been already mentioned, but may still better be conceived from Mr. Brian Hill's description of a Sicilian landlady. She was "between fifty and sixty years of age, very plain, and immensely fat." Her dress was "a garment once white, then abominably dirty, without stays, and her clotted hair hung over her eyes like the snakes of a Medusa's head." She was "very vociferous,

full of action, and extremely indelicate ;” and a bottle of Syracuse wine she stole and swallowed, made her so drunk one evening, that she frightened one of the servants into most humble submission. In Sir Richard Hill’s apartment hung her picture with her head dressed high, with a feather and a blue bandeau ; and at one corner of her mouth, which was drawn smiling, there was a black patch, while her hand held, with an elegant turn of the little finger, a full blown rose intended as the emblem of her charms. She is not the first *fine* lady, whose portrait has been wonderfully at variance with the every day appearance of the original. One night, after keeping her customers waiting four hours for their supper, she told them the old cock was not boiled half tender, and the old hen, its companion, was not put down to roast ; so they went fasting to bed, afraid to wake the dormant spirit of the Amazon.

The palaces of the Sicilian nobility are described as singular enough. One of the most curious, was that of Palagonia, kept up with grotesque taste by a *principe* of this name. Behind the *château* was a semicircular court, covered with statues of the most whimsical description. They represented men and women, some playing on fiddles, and some on flutes and violoncellos. Others had enormous heads and bodies with distorted countenances, while here and there an ass’s head was set upon human shoulders, and a bird’s neck and beak upon a lady’s waist, besides every other monstrosity man could conceive. The interior was as odd as the outside. One apartment was fitted up with china pots, little images, bits of coloured glass, and gilded ornaments. Its ceiling was coved, and covered with looking-glasses. In another room were marble statues of the members of the family, placed in niches of the wall, dressed in long flowing

wigs and lace ruffles. Sir Richard Hill, however, found one palace elegantly fitted up and very comfortable.

The travellers, as is mentioned in Sir Richard Hill's letter, visited the convent of San Martino, about seven miles from Palermo. None but sons of nobles were members of that fraternity, where they were sent for education; and at the expiration of seven years, they were obliged to turn either monks or knights of Malta, who equally with those who lead the monastic life, made a vow of chastity. They found the convent very magnificent. Its situation was high, facing the North, and behind it a lofty mountain. The entrance was through a hall supported by marble pillars, whence a splendid double staircase of Sicilian marble conducted to the apartments of the superior, the walls of which were painted in fresco. Galleries as long as the sides of the Bodleian at Oxford, led to the different chambers; and at the end of one of them was a fountain of great beauty half enclosed with laurels. The library, supported by Corinthian pillars made of walnut-trees finely polished, had a striking effect, and contained numerous books. There was also a museum with many curiosities, the principal of which was a manuscript in the Morocco language, stating that the Saracens when they entered the island, took possession of the convent, and killed thirty of the monks. When the Hills visited the place the fraternity consisted of only ten members, who were divided into two parties, regarding each other with abhorrence. They were invited to a dinner¹ of great

¹ As the reader may be curious to know the bill of fare of the Convent of St. Martin in the last century, I give the outline of the dinner. *First Course*.—A tureen at top and bottom, containing in one, gravy soup, in the other, macaroni and cheese. On one side was bouilli, on the opposite, woodcock pie. At the four corners

luxury ; and so plentifully was the wine served by the butler, that if a sip was only taken out of a glass, it was instantly refilled. Four monks and one stranger, an ecclesiastic of high rank, were all that attended at the table to receive the English guests, and of these only two monks partook of any of the viands ; the other two being offended because Prince Caramanico,¹ who introduced the Hills, had not recommended them to *their* party. When they had no company, they were all obliged to dine together ; but the two sets never noticed each other. Report spoke loudly of their dissolute conduct.

Sir Richard Hill and his fellow-travellers, nothing daunted by the rumours of banditti, which frightened home a young German student they invited to go with them, visited most places of interest in the island, and passed through various adventures in perfect safety. At Messina, on arriving at their inn, the master of the house addressed them with a smile of unconcern, and said, “ Gentlemen, you may repose yourselves without fear, my house being a ground-floor barrack, and built with cane and plaster, will probably stand the shock of an earthquake, if there should be one ; but if it is thrown down, the materials are so light, you will be in no danger of being killed.” So little did the people seem to

were paties, and different made dishes chiefly in pastry. *Second Course*.—Red mullets, roast fowls, rissoles, a pudding of pistachio nuts. *Desert*.—Seventeen dishes, among which were two plates with thin slices of raw bacon, one of anchovies, one of cheese, one of fennel and one of celery. Next came ices, and then coffee.—Where was the *mortification* !

¹ The Viceroy being a Freemason, had given his letter to the party which contained one of his brother masons. The other contained none of that brotherhood. The Hills were Freemasons.

regard these shocks, that when the landlord was asked how long it was since the last, he replied, "Three days ago," when the waiter corrected him with, "No, five, Sir." They kept no account, though their city was a scene of magnificent desolation at that very moment, from the last great overthrow.

On their arrival at Syracuse, the party went to see their inn. Before they had been there five minutes, they were obliged to fly from legions of fleas which they saw crawling up their legs in swarms, but they fortunately met with better lodgings. They received a visit from the Baron Miloco, who conducted them to the singular cavern called the Ear of Dionysius, and to the various antiquities of the town. Their friend the baron informed them he intended to pay a visit to England during the next year, and inquired, "Pray do you travel there *on camels*, or have you any more convenient mode of conveyance?" This said baron had been, as may be supposed, a very stay-at-home gentleman; in fact, he never saw the curiosities of Syracuse but once before in his life.¹

On the road to Catania, their baggage was attacked by a robber, who was quickly driven away by the guard. They had, however, a more serious alarm, for the beasts that bore the litiga began to trot, which they seldom did, and off went the vehicle from their backs with its inmates into the sea. Providentially, however, there was little depth of water, and below a soft sand, so that they received no injury.

¹ Nor was he very hospitable, for though he shewed the Hills the inside of his carriage, he never let them see the inside of his house. Sir Richard Hill, however, said, if he came to England, he would let him know that if the English *did not ride upon camels*, they knew how to give strangers a welcome to their tables.

Before they left Messina to cross over into Calabria, Mr. Brian Hill wished to view the last flourish of the Carnival. The streets were crowded to see the triumphal car, which was paraded through them drawn by six horses. Within it were masked figures scattering *bon bons* among the people. One of the servants whose duty it was to clear the way, having struck a man with his sword, a scuffle ensued, during which Mr. Brian Hill was luckily pushed into a druggist's shop, or he might have received much injury from the mob which became outrageous, formed into parties, and fought, half killing the poor man who commenced the fray. He went home heartily tired, like many other people, of the follies of masquerading.

Soon after they began their journey through Calabria, their courier was robbed by banditti, the reports concerning whom they had too much reason to know had not been over-stated to them.

They arrived at Monte Leone during Lent, where they found no difficulty in being allowed to dress *gras* food at that season, as they feared. But the inhabitants were more scrupulous than at Naples, where dispensations could be purchased by the poor for fivepence each, and the rich for ten shillings, the proceeds of which the king coolly put in his own pocket. They lodged in the house of an ecclesiastic, who was a sailor six days in the week and a priest one. He grumbled sadly at the papal law, which forbade him to take a wife to look after his domestic affairs, and contrasted his misfortune in this respect with the conjugal comforts permitted to the English clergy. Sir Richard Hill said to him, "You are allowed some things interdicted to them; for instance, you may wear ruffles, which they may not." "Ah, Sir," replied he with a sigh, "if one of your clergy will give me his wife

to take care of my property, he shall be heartily welcome to my ruffles."

On arriving at Palermo, they fell in with two English gentlemen, to whom they were strangers. They inquired if there was any news at Naples, when one of the gentlemen replied, "Yes, great apprehensions are entertained for the safety of Sir Richard Hill and company, who are supposed to have been taken by the Algerines. Perhaps you can inform us if this is true." Sir Richard smiled and replied, "I am happy to be able to give you *ocular* demonstration to the contrary."

Full of thankfulness to the gracious Providence which brought them safely through their expedition, they arrived at Rome in time to witness a more brilliant holy week than usual, in consequence of a visit from the King and Queen of Naples, and the *Mesdames* of France. The ceremonies commenced on Palm Sunday, when they proceeded to the Sixtine Chapel. There the Pope was seated under a splendid canopy, dressed in a robe of crimson satin, laced with gold. The Cardinals entered with great pomp, having their trains borne by their attendants. In this manner they approached his Holiness, and knelt down one by one to kiss the sacred toe, while the robes which had previously covered it, were held up by the proper officers for the purpose. The Pope then presented each of them with a branch of palm tree, ornamented fantastically with straw-coloured ribbons. Persons in full dress were all permitted to partake in the ceremony of the kiss, but received from the Pope only a small olive branch each, without any ribbon. When this homage ended, the Pontiff was placed in a gorgeous chair of state, borne by twelve men, who carried him in procession. He held in his hand a large

branch of palm, adorned like his chair with crimson and gold. Thus passed off the Palm Sunday, April 17, 1791. On the 20th, the King and Queen of Naples arrived from Florence, and on the same afternoon the *Miserere* was performed in the Sixtine Chapel, to which no one could be admitted except in deep mourning. This performance has long been the finest specimen of the perfect combination of human voices, without accompaniment, in the world. The Pope was not present, as the music was only for the Cardinals; but the King of Naples attended, and talked so loud to the company about him, that Sir Richard Hill came to the conclusion that his enjoyment of harmony was much on a par with his taste for sculpture, painting, and antiquities, of which he had seen such manifestations in Sicily. The next day his Holiness himself officiated at a grand mass, which was attended by all his royal visitors, who appeared in boxes erected for them, outside the space on which none but consecrated feet are permitted to tread. The mass lasted two hours, and throughout its performance the various ecclesiastics were employed in changing the numerous dresses of the Pope, and his several splendid mitres. The old man, then past seventy-four, was so loaded with finery, that he seemed ready to sink under its weight in the midst of the heat and throng. He was also oppressed with the additional fatigue of embracing and kissing the Cardinals.

As soon as these ceremonies were ended, they were followed by the imposing one of the Benediction. The Pope, arrayed in a robe of scarlet and gold, with a mitre of gold tissue on his head, was carried in his chair of state to the balcony in front of St. Peter's. A body of infantry was drawn up in line before the church, making an area for two parties of cavalry that issued at the same

instant from each colonade, and advanced with colours flying, and with drums and trumpets sounding, to the centre, where they dismounted and fell upon their knees. Their example was followed by the vast multitude around them, all in profound silence, awaiting the long-expected moment of the blessing. The report of a cannon from the castle of St. Angelo gave the signal, when Pius the Sixth stood up, every knee in his city having bent at the sound, and waving his hand with great dignity and grace, pronounced the Benediction. Then by way of humiliation, he proceeded to wash and kiss the feet of twelve poor men of as many different nations, to each of whom a Cardinal gave a flower and a piece of money ; and afterwards they were conducted to a table elegantly decorated with bouquets and sweetmeats, and were served by the Pope and Cardinals with a capital dinner of fish.

The day ended with another *Miserere*, and as soon as the shades of evening came on, a large gilt cross was suspended in the middle of St. Peter's, and beautifully illuminated. At this time there took place four processions of men and boys up the church, carrying crucifixes and torches. They were masked with linen veils, and wore long loose gowns fastened round the waist, and coloured cloaks over their shoulders. Some wore sandals, others were barefoot, having altogether an unearthly appearance. When they reached the altar, they knelt around it, while the priests went on with their mummeries, scattering the holy water, and exhibiting the relics, which consisted of a piece of the *real cross*, the holy handkerchief, &c.

All the morning, a Cardinal was seated in state, to absolve from sins called *casus reservati*, which the common priests were obliged to leave for this occasion—a

successful invention for bringing plenty of stranger pilgrims to Rome at this peculiar time!

The party from Hawkstone were too glad to change this spectacle for a fête at the Palazzo Doria, to which they were invited by the Prince. Their invitation was to meet the King and Queen of Naples. The apartments were profusely lighted up, and contained a thousand visitors of the first people in Rome. Soon after eleven their Majesties arrived, and made a promenade through all the rooms, conversing freely with the company, and then retired to take refreshments in a private room. After this ices, lemonade, and cakes were handed round by "an army of domestics," and the whole concluded by a grand concert. The next day these servants went to the private residences of the guests to beg for fees, a custom then prevalent through Italy, and carried to such an extent upon the most trifling intercourse with their masters, that one man actually applied to Sir Richard Hill because, *to oblige his employer*, he had taken a letter for him to Naples!

During the ceremonies, the Vatican was surrounded by the Pope's guards, whose whimsical dress has been often described. Those whose special office it was to keep order, wore armour and helmets. On the 22d, a third *miserere*, different from the others, was sung in the Sistine Chapel, after which the Pope and Cardinals went to St. Peter's to pay their adorations before the illuminated cross. On the 23d, the exterior of St. Peter's was magnificently illuminated. The whole building appeared at first like a drawing sketched in gilt on the tablet of the surrounding darkness, but in an instant, by means of some ingenious contrivance, the lamps changed from appearing like studs of gold, into bright flaming stars, as the Pope approached in a state coach

drawn by six white horses. As soon as he arrived, a wondrous display of fireworks issued from the castle of St. Angelo, for which his Holiness, out of compliment to his royal guests, had given four hundred crowns extraordinary. Unhappily the great discharge, accompanied by the roar of cannon, caused the horses of two carriages to run away, by which means two persons were killed and seven much hurt.

The morning of the 24th was fixed for the performance of grand mass by the Pope himself at St. Peter's, followed by another benediction, in the same state, and to a greater multitude than before. The whole was concluded by the canonization of a female French Saint, which no doubt greatly delighted the royal ladies from Versailles. The Pontiff declared with extreme gravity, that she had performed "three notable miracles," and having now been dead a hundred years, she came within the laws of canonization, which forbid it till that time after decease. What the miracles were did not transpire, but the canonization took place with much pomp and solemnity.

The evening of this day was set apart to a horse race in the Corso. The horses ran without riders, and were urged to madness in their course by prickly balls fastened to their backs, which acted sharper and sharper as the poor animals' speed was increased. One of them ran against a carriage, and was so much injured that he died in a few minutes. The victor was presented to the King and Queen of Naples, who viewed the cruel sport from a balcony of the Doria palace. State coaches paraded the street, cannon were fired, and every art was called forth to give splendour and eclat to the worthless scene of superstition, revelry, and folly.

At length the *holy ceremonies* concluded with another

illumination of St. Peter's, and a repetition of the fireworks from St. Angelo.

The Pope, Pius the Sixth, was celebrated for his *public kissings*, which he performed with great zeal, and an extraordinary air of devotion. Every day about two o'clock this Pontiff might be seen in St. Peter's, dressed in a white robe and red slippers, with only one or two attendants, going from altar to altar, kneeling at each with an air of solemn devotion, and the graceful dignity which he is said to have possessed in a very superior degree. When this circuit was complete, his Holiness never failed to proceed to the old brazen statue found in the Tiber, and unquestionably a Roman figure, but which the Catholics have conjured into St. Peter, with as much correctness as they have made him their first Pope. However, the fervour of the holy father was in no respect damped by the uncertainty of the origin of the celebrated bronze, for as soon as he had reached it, he kissed it again and again. He then retired backward several times, bowing before it with the deepest humility, till at length he bent down and put his head beneath the sole of its foot, in token of submission to him whose supremacy he owned, but of whom the wit said, that the painters always painted him with a red face, as blushing at the folly and impudence of his pretended successors. Yet, as there were many kissers of the sacred toe besides Pope Pius, it was observed that one of his attendants wiped it very carefully with a clean cloth before it was touched by the papal lips. As soon as his Holiness retired, a curious scene ensued; for many persons who were waiting on purpose, had a regular scramble to get the first kiss after the Pope, that they might enjoy the virtue of the warm salutes he had bestowed upon the foot, before any less hallowed mouth came in contact

with it. Such was Popery in the last century. It burns now with comparative dimness, occasionally emitting a sudden flare under the energetic fanning of its zealous upholders. It may yet throw out a stronger flame, but it will have no great effect, unless darkness be permitted to spread over us in judgment. When the Sun of Righteousness beams forth in its glory, and sheds its blessed radiance over hill and vale, and sea and river, the papal torch will be visible no more.

CHAPTER XVII.

FRENCH REVOLUTION. LIBELLOUS ATTACK UPON SIR RICHARD HILL AND HIS BROTHER ROWLAND. REMARKS OF SIR RICHARD. STRIKING OUTLINE OF THE CHARACTER AND CAREER OF MR. ROWLAND HILL. PROSECUTION OF THE LIBEL. SPEECH OF MR. ERSKINE. VERDICT OF GUILTY. REMARKS OF LORD KENYON. DISTINGUISHED GUESTS OF SIR RICHARD HILL. THE STADTHOLDER AT HAWKSTONE. ENORMOUS BUNCH OF GRAPES. OBSERVATION OF GENERAL PAOLI. CHEERFULNESS OF SIR RICHARD HILL. HIS SENTIMENTS RESPECTING THE WAR. HIS SPEECH. SPECIMENS OF HIS HIGH PRINCIPLE. IMPROVEMENT IN SOCIETY.

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

WHEN Sir Richard Hill returned to England, he continued his public and private exertions for the promotion of true religion, and the interests of his fellow-creatures, with all his former zeal, integrity, and kindness. His spirits were much saddened at the gloomy shade cast over the surface of Europe, by the awful state of France and the barbarities of the revolution in that nation, which afforded an example to the whole earth of the true character of infidelity, when it lets loose its furies to gorge themselves with blood. It is a demon of darkness, waiting only for the night to rush in with its harpy legions, flapping their terrific wings and appalling with their screams those deluded victims, who suddenly trans-

fixed by relentless talons find themselves without hope, or light, or refuge. Such were the horrors of the French revolution, and such will be the invariable result of every successful attempt to bring in the monster Scepticism, instead of that blessed Truth which is our noonday shade, our refuge from the storm, our defence and lamp in darkness.

But the piety and virtues of Sir Richard Hill could not afford security against slander, though they obtained a noble triumph over it. He and Mr. Rowland Hill were grossly assailed by an adversary, against whom he found it necessary to appeal to the verdict of a jury, which was unhesitatingly given in his favour. It was also accompanied by the high encomium, from as honest a judge as ever wore the robes of justice, which forms the motto of this volume. The gross libel he considered it right to prosecute, bore the contemptible title, “a Cure for Canting,” and was a tissue of the most impudent and vulgar abuse imaginable. In his observations on it, Sir Richard Hill thus modestly defended himself. “Feeling, as I do, the weight of declining years, being now nearly arrived at my grand climacteric,¹ and looking back, as I trust I can, with more than indifference on a world I must very soon leave, to give an account of all my deeds done in the body, rejecting with abhorrence the Pharisee boast of ‘God, I thank thee, I am not as other men are,’ and shuddering to approach my Maker with any other plea but that of the humble self-abased publican; yet in the retrospect of so many days that are past, I am not afraid of being deemed too presumptuous, in making my solemn appeal to conscience and to the whole world, that not one of those days has ever been

¹ This was written in 1794.

sullied by a single mean or ignoble action towards my fellow-creatures. Self-vindication must ever be most painful to a feeling mind, but personal attacks demand a personal defence ; and under such circumstances, truth, honour, character, and religion itself must all concur in the propriety of such vindication, provided a delicacy be observed as to particular instances." In the libel alluded to, though notoriously the poor man's friend and generous benefactor, he was described as oppressive and avaricious. In reply to this last remark, he beautifully observes, " Thanks be to that gracious Providence who hath given me what I have, for giving me at the same time to know and feel that there can be no happiness in riches, but with riches to make each other happy : insomuch that I scruple not at all to affirm, that I would rather live on £100 or even £50 a year, than be the possessor of millions, either for the purposes they are too frequently lavished, prostituted, and abused, or to increase a sordid heap of mouldering dust ; so that for whatever else I may have occasion to be humbled as a sinner before my God, I trust I may by his grace anticipate that my death-bed will not shake under me with the horrors of that sentence :—' Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten ; your gold and silver are cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and you shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.'¹ The time is at hand when the mask of hypocrisy must be plucked from every visage, and when professions of faith will be judged by the works they

¹ James v. 1.

have produced, towards the souls and bodies of our neighbours. Till that period arrive, the estimates which my fellow-mortals may make of me, are of so little avail, that were it not that the honour of religion itself is struck at, by the blows which are levelled at those who in this day of rebuke and blasphemy, infidelity and profaneness, are not ashamed to confess it and its divine Author, I should not have made a word of reply to all the envenomed tongues of falsehood, malice, and slander united." The pamphlet Sir Richard Hill considered it his duty to notice for these reasons, proceeded from a person to whom he had been particularly kind, and in whose favour he had successfully applied to his friend Mr. Pitt; so that the man himself had written, "I was become known to Sir Richard Hill, who always treated me with that liberal condescension and kindness for which he is so justly characterized"—an encomium which he afterwards exchanged for almost unprecedented abuse and invective, because even the kind patience of his patron was unable to hold out against his forwardness, and unreasonable applications. His letters also became impertinent and troublesome, and their tone of pretence sometimes rendered them ridiculous. "A little money," said he in one of them, "is much wanted by way of a present; *its* much wanted for a very pressing and immediate purpose. Besides it will give fresh vigour to my genius, and will add irresistible force to the thunders of my eloquence:

Destruction sooner comes and rattles louder
Out of a mine of gold than out of *Powder*."

Mr. Rowland Hill also, tired by the same causes, was at length obliged to forbid the man his house, upon which he directed his abuse against him, as well as Sir Richard.

Some pious person, unknown to any of the family, was so much grieved by the scurrility heaped upon the excellent minister of Surrey Chapel, that he sent to a morning paper an admirable delineation of his character and proceedings. And it is indeed almost entirely with the view of introducing into this chapter the striking testimonies to the goodness of these two remarkable brothers, by great and good men, that I have noticed this paltry affair at all. The letter just mentioned was as follows, and is signed "A Christian."

"The Rev. Rowland Hill is fourth son of the late very respectable baronet of that name, and brother to Sir Richard Hill, who has for several years represented the county of Salop in Parliament.

"Rowland's pious disposition discovered itself at a very early period. When he was a little boy at Eton school, he used to get up before his school-fellows, and run to the morning prayers of the church, from which he could return in time for the meeting of the school. His pocket-money was always employed for the relief of the poor, and his leisure hours were engaged in visiting the distressed, and alleviating their sorrows, in which his sympathizing breast took a near part.

"When Mr. Hill had gone through Eton school, he entered St. John's College, Cambridge, where he performed his exercises and took his degrees with no small credit; but the bent of his mind being for holy orders, and religion his most delightful work, he took frequent opportunities of visiting the poor prisoners, talking with them about their everlasting concerns, praying with them, and reading the Scriptures to them. This way of spending his vacant hours, Mr. Hill judged to be at least as proper employment for a candidate for the ministry, as sitting at the bottle or the card-table.

“ But it was looked upon as quite *too much*, and construed as having a strong savour of *enthusiasm* by some of his superiors in college. It therefore contributed not a little to prevent his being elected Fellow of that Society, and by this means to exclude him from some valuable preferment which was in his father's gift, restrained by the will of an ancestor to Fellows of St. John's College. However, Mr. Hill always speaks with gratitude and respect of his kind tutor, Dr. Frampton, as also of the candour and attention he met with from the present worthy and learned Master of Jesus, then Dean of St. John's, who expressed his abhorrence of all persecution for conscience sake, and bore this testimony to Mr. Hill, that he knew no one better qualified to make a good useful parish priest.

“ If Mr. Hill met with some hard treatment at college on the above account, it was soon rendered much harder by the obstacles which were thrown in the way of his ordination, for a considerable time before that event took place by the late Bishop of Bath and Wells. It is not my design to justify Mr. Hill's conduct in anything that may have been really imprudent or irregular in itself, or contrary to the stated rules and discipline of the Church of England; but I must beg leave to remark, that *imprudences*, and *irregularities* of a much worse kind have frequently passed unnoticed; and that those who denied him admission into the Church, have been the principal agents in sending him to labour out of it, and thereby making him the instrument of calling many sinners to repentance, who, never, perhaps, would have heard any minister's voice within the consecrated walls. If, therefore, after the example of his divine Master, he has sometimes ‘made the earth his pulpit and the heavens his sounding-board,’ candour will surely admit some

apology for his conduct, and esteem him less blameworthy, than if with the unprofitable servant, he had deceitfully buried his talent in the earth, and struck away from his pastoral work *out of season*, because he was not suffered to perform it *in season*.

"With regard to the doctrines which Mr. Hill has ever professed and preached, they are those which were made the test of admission into the Anglican Church at the time of the Reformation, and to which he has solemnly subscribed in her articles, homilies, and liturgy.

"As to enthusiastic frenzies and reveries, no man upon earth can bear stronger testimony against them than Mr. Hill uniformly does, always leading his hearers to the pure written word of God, and assuring them, that whilst warm imaginations and true grace are often at a wide distance from each other, there can be no proof that their repentance is sincere, but by *bringing forth fruits meet for repentance*.

"The mode of Mr. Hill's preaching is purposely adapted to the cases and capacities of the poorer sort. After the manner of our blessed Saviour's parables, his illustrations are plain, simple, and drawn from nature; and according to the method which good old Bishop Latimer, the martyr, found so useful, are often interspersed with striking anecdotes and examples suited to the subjects he is upon. I do not, however, say this is always the case. Mr. Hill is frequently invited to preach charity sermons in different churches, on which occasions, though he never fails to be plain and faithful, yet there is usually a solemn dignity of language, which at once commands attention and respect, and a nervous manly style of expression accompanying his warm and affectionate addresses, especially when he is endeavouring to impress his hearers with a deep sense of the evil of sin,

and of the danger of neglecting the great salvation of the gospel.

"As to Mr. Hill's life and conversation, they are a continual speaking comment on the soundness of his doctrine, and carry with them the most convincing proof of the apostolic assertion, that the faith which saves the soul, will ever work by love to God, and to our neighbour; insomuch that malice itself may be provoked and defied to lay a finger upon any one immoral act in Mr. Hill's life, even from his early childhood. View him as a master, husband, friend, or in any other relationship in which he stands, you will always behold in him that amiable sweetness of disposition, that liberality of sentiment and generosity of temper, which adorn the Christian, the clergyman, and the gentleman. It must be added, that formal grimace and stiff preciseness make no part of Mr. Hill's religion. He sees real piety and innocent pleasantry may be very good friends; and this at once renders his company lively and useful, instructive and entertaining.

"Such truly is the man whom envy calumniates, and malice holds forth as the object of persecution and contempt.

"I must now subjoin that the Rev. Mr. Hill knows nothing of this letter, nor who is the author of it; and as I am certain that I have not advanced anything but what injured innocence demands, truth enforces, and justice requires, I call on Mr. Hill's most inveterate enemies—though I lament that I can make any such call—to investigate what I have said to the bottom, and then weigh both my assertions and Mr. Hill's character in the balance of sound judgment, fair candour, and unprejudiced reason."

True as was this portrait, by an unknown but skilful

hand, of the character of Mr. Rowland Hill, that character could not save him from the reproaches of a man who, though at first humbly thankful for the least elcmosynary assistance, afterwards thought himself "deserving well of his country, and worthy to be a Bishop!" Because also Sir Richard Hill was wearied by his importunities, he vowed he would "cut him completely up, flay him alive, and dress him well," for such were the *butcher-like* threats he held out to his once generous helper in time of great necessity. Good, however, came out of this despicable evil. It produced the excellent letter from "a Christian," in favour of his laborious brother, and a most able eulogium on the worth of Sir Richard Hill himself, from no less a person than the celebrated Erskine.

Sir Richard Hill thought it requisite for the sake of religion—for his high moral character could not be injured by such an assault—to prosecute the author of this libel, and on the day of trial Mr. Erskine, as counsel for the plaintiff, delivered the following true and able observations on the well-known virtues of his respected client.

"Gentlemen, you will, I am sure, be shocked at hearing the indecency, scurrility, and ribaldry of this attack upon an honourable man; and I cannot help saying, that as some good arises out of every evil that can be stated, so one feels—I beg pardon of Sir Richard Hill for saying it—so one feels a sort of solace at hearing such a libel read upon such a person; because in this age of calumny, when no man's honour is safe, whatever his character and conduct may be, a man may have this to say, when he is smarting under the lash of slander—he will be able to say in these times, '*even Sir Richard Hill* is the object of such a calumny.' Mr. Erskine then

described the nature of the libel,¹ and proceeded—"Scattered throughout this production are these gross and scandalous calumnies. And, gentlemen, upon whom is this calumny cast? Upon a man the most beneficent and inoffensive in the world! And in what manner inoffensive? Not from obscurity or poverty; no, he is the possessor of one of the most splendid inheritances in this island, which, by the accession of art and creative cultivation, he has converted into a sort of Paradise—not to riot there in criminal debauchery, unmindful of Him who placed him in it, but whose life is a pattern of modesty, piety, and goodness; whose first gratification in the great expence which he creates, is the relief and sustentation of the poor whom he feeds by it; and whose house, the seat of honest, virtuous, English hospitality, and the receptacle of everything which can render life comfortable or delightful, is at the same time, as it were, a house of prayer for the service of the Great Dispenser of all benefits and blessings. Gentlemen, I say this, and I am happy by the cause being late, that it was left me to say it, not from my brief, not from my instructions, not from the information of others, but I speak it from my own knowledge of what I say, from my childhood upwards, and an experience, fortunately, for me a very large and long one. Gentlemen, that such a man as this should be the object of such a calumny is horrible; more especially as I will prove to you, if the necessity of the case should call for it, that Sir Richard Hill has been brought into contact with this defendant, and been made the subject of his animadversions by his, the defendant, having been an object of his bounty. He recommended him in his profession, thinking well of him, in order to

¹ It was a string of impertinent names not worth repeating.

enable him to support himself and his family. But I pause here: we are not upon the subject of ingratitude, we are upon the subject of guilt."

Lord Kenyon observed, when the evidence had been offered, "It is much to be lamented that this man should have written such a book, attacking the character of such a man. It is possible from a long acquaintance, one might think more of a man than he deserves; but to be sure, there never lived upon earth a better man." In charging the jury, the learned judge merely observed, "Gentlemen of the jury, I have nothing more to say than that you have heard the evidence of the publication, and will consider of your verdict." They immediately declared the defendant *guilty*, and Lord Kenyon pronounced the encomium on Sir Richard Hill which I have selected for the motto of this volume. To the libel on Mr. Rowland Hill the defendant pleaded *guilty*. Thus ended this singular affair, the only effect of which was to extend the knowledge and admiration of the characters assailed.

The two eminent lawyers just mentioned, whose distinguished abilities raised them to the highest judicial stations, and to the peerage, were frequent visitors at Hawkstone. Lord Erskine was often there before he even went to the bar, to which he was called at a later period of life than is usual. When he first came to Hawkstone, he was a young and lively officer, but shewed symptoms at that time of the talent for eloquence, which afterwards placed him in the very first class of forensic orators. I have heard Mrs. Rowland Hill say that she remembered his reading some sermons of his own composition, which were written in a style of great beauty, force, and pathos. His manners also were extremely vivacious and engaging, and rendered him a

welcome guest in the houses of his friends. In the power of attracting attention and winning his way with a jury, he has perhaps scarcely ever been equalled. His voice, his manner, and the interest he gave to the driest subjects, combined with an indescribable art of infusing into those whom he addressed, a happy self-complacency at their own comprehension of his illustrations, enabled him to convert into gratified listeners, men who had been reluctantly compelled to the performance of an unwelcome but necessary duty. These were the qualities that made him so brilliant as an advocate; and when they could be no longer called into exercise, in the higher and more dignified station to which they conducted him, it is no wonder that his genius seemed to have lost its lustre, and that a shadow passed over his once dazzling fame.

The reputation, legal acquirements, and high integrity of Lord Kenyon need no commendation here. He had the truest regard for Sir Richard Hill, and greatly enjoyed the pleasure of being his guest. He was remarkable for the plainness of dress and unaffected deportment, which often accompany distinguished abilities into the private walks of life. The terms in which he is constantly spoken of by those who remember him at Hawkstone, are such as convey assurance of the same admiration of his straightforward disposition by his social friends, that won him so much esteem and confidence in his exalted station as a judge. Sir Richard Hill became acquainted through this esteemed nobleman, with many other eminent lawyers, particularly Lords Thurlow, Alvanley, and Baron Eyre, who found a happy respite from the toils of public duty in his hospitable mansion. He was not only favoured with the company of these distinguished judges and statesmen, but several bishops,

as well as Dr. Moore, Archbishop of Canterbury, accepted invitations to Hawkstone, and were his frequent guests in London. No man of his day had a more extensive acquaintance, or succeeded better in drawing round him the talents of his age, all of whom, whether opposed to his views of religion or not, united with one consent in appreciating the excellence of his unbending and devoted character. At the same time that he was surrounded by persons of the first rank and ability, he was proud of being the friend of any humble and despised minister of the gospel, who was zealously employed in the sacred duties of his office.

Sir Richard Hill had not only the satisfaction of receiving as his visitors, the most distinguished of his own fellow-countrymen, but also entertained with great hospitality many eminent foreigners. When the Stadtholder and his consort were in England, they found a kind welcome at Hawkstone, and were exceedingly delighted with the wonders of the place and the hospitality of its owner. They came there without any parade, travelling in the quietest way ; but Sir Richard Hill treated them in a manner most gratifying to their feelings. His hot-houses were celebrated for the prodigious grapes which they produced ; and having at that time a most extraordinary bunch, he saved it with great care for the visit of their Highnesses. To their astonishment they beheld on his table this single bunch of grapes, suspended by an orange ribbon from an ornamental frame of wood-work ; and their surprise was extreme, when they were told that the whole mass depended upon a single stalk, although its weight was then sixteen pounds and a half. It had weighed seventeen before some decayed berries were removed, and was probably the largest ever grown in this country. What they saw at Hawkstone

greatly pleased this amiable pair, and their stay was rendered very agreeable to all parties by their unaffected and affable deportment, to which they added the most unequivocal demonstrations of real enjoyment of the natural beauties, as well as domestic comforts of the place. And in truth men of all descriptions who came there, expressed the same feelings. General Paoli, when he wandered over the varied and enchanting scenes it displays, exclaimed, " Well, truly it was worth while to have come all the way from Corsica, only to see Hawkstone."

Beautiful as Hawkstone is in itself, the recollections of a few days' wanderings amongst its woods and rocks, were made doubly pleasant by the cheerful spirit of its truly kind and hospitable host, who, while he loved religion, hated all that was morose. He had a perpetual fund of innocent humour, and was fond of giving vent to it in a way that the most austere could scarcely disapprove. Not only did it impart a lively tone to his conversation, but it appeared in the inscriptions he placed on remarkable spots in the wild scenery of the park, which, nevertheless, had a tendency to convey some useful moral lesson. Like all other men, he was not faultless; but it is the opinion of those who had the best opportunities of knowing his real character, that this country has not seen a nobler example than the one he presented, of the Christian Gentleman.

Notice has been before taken of the independent course of Sir Richard Hill as a Member of Parliament, a proof of which occurred in his determination to vote in opposition to Mr. Pitt, for the amendment of Mr. Wilberforce to the address on the war, the first day of the session of 1795. It was afterwards reported that he was sorry for having done so, upon which he published a declaration that he lamented the reason which

had induced him to take that step, but utterly denied any sorrow for the act. He said of Mr. Pitt, at the same time that he vindicated himself, " His integrity and abilities no man upon earth ever held in higher estimation than myself, and I have almost uniformly voted with him on every great national question for more than ten years past, and I hope often to do so again ; but I never resigned to him my right of private judgment, nor ever required any other person on earth to make such a sacrifice to me ; and however weak or erroneous that judgment may be, after having used all means of information, I should be unworthy a seat in the British senate, were I not to follow it : especially were I not to do so on the present occasion, when I feel my whole soul most awfully and abidingly impressed with a sense of the great danger which must inevitably accrue to this country by prosecuting the war. Insomuch, that I affirm with trembling, that if peace be not concluded before the ensuing summer, all future attempts for negociation may then be too late, and every method we are now using to crush French principles and French armies be the means of bringing both into the nation." Unhappily French principles made awful inroads on the minds of many of our people, and the vile seeds they scattered over the surface of the land are not yet all destroyed ; but thanks be to a gracious Providence, we were spared the miseries of seeing the arms of our then hostile neighbours on the shores of England. Though in mercy to those who abhorred the first mentioned evil, the latter was prevented, and Sir Richard Hill's prediction unfulfilled, yet there was so much good sense and upright feeling in the short speech he delivered on the first day of the session, that I cannot withhold it. He supported the amendment of his beloved friend Mr. Wil-

berforce, in the following honest expression of his views.

“ Mr. Speaker,—though I never attempt to deliver my sentiments in this House without feeling that awe and respect which are due to the assembly before which I stand, yet at no time do I remember to have risen under so much distress and agitation as I do at present.

“ Any one, who may have paid the smallest attention to the conduct of so insignificant an individual, must have observed that for the course of many years, I have shewn an uniform and steady attachment to the present administration, and particularly to the truly worthy and distinguished character at the helm of public affairs ; I have, therefore, always esteemed it my honour and my happiness, to give him my feeble support and my confidence. But *Amicus Plato, Amicus Socrates, Magis Amica Patria.*

“ Sir, my difficulty does not end here. I have always understood that an address of thanks for a speech from the throne, carried with it a degree of personal respect to the throne itself: happy then should I esteem myself, could I give my voice for the original motion this night; but if I am thereby to be looked upon as pledging myself to vote for the continuation of the war, I cannot in conscience do it. How, Sir, could I again look my constituents or my countrymen in the face, were I to vote the money out of their pockets, and the blood out of their veins, in support of a war which has hitherto been disastrous in the extreme, and which, if persisted in, I am persuaded will be most awful in the event !

“ It is true, when the war first took place, I voted for it as a war of *justice* and of *necessity*, nay, as a war which was *unavoidable*. I was convinced that our alarms, both as to internal and external danger, were far from being chimerical or groundless, and I thought,

and do think, that much praise was due to Government for their timely and wise exertions for the safety of the country. But when our last campaign was ended, and we had fulfilled every engagement with our allies (who, by the bye had fulfilled none with us) I was exceedingly grieved to see that ministers were bent on prosecuting the war, and should certainly have voted for a motion made for peace, towards the close of the last session, by the Right Hon. Gentleman, whose philanthropy is universally acknowledged and whose lenity I myself have sufficiently experienced, when he might, by a word, have crushed me to atoms—had it not been for something which fell from the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the course of the debate, which was, *That the French Convention would declare any of their members traitors, who should but mention peace with England.* This decided my vote that night; but let it be observed that the sanguinary faction of Robespierre then ruled. Since then, several months have elapsed, during which we have been *prosecuting the war with vigour*, as it is called; but what have we, or what have our allies, gained by it? I believe the word *ruin* will answer the question for all parties. Try it for the Emperor; try it for the King of Spain; try it for the King of Sardinia; try it for the Stadtholder; I am unwilling to say, try it for ourselves. But have any steps been taken by us to put an end to the war? I fear none at all. On the contrary, have we not been soliciting, bribing, courting, wooing kings and emperors to carry on the war, almost whether they would or not? And with what difficulty have they at last been coaxed to defend their own territories with English money!

“To bring this matter to a short issue—Is there an honest independent man in this House who will ask,

‘ Is there, or is there not, an opportunity of making peace on any tolerable terms?’ If it be said *yes*, then, in God’s name¹ let us endeavour to do it without delay ; if *no*, then let us withdraw our forces from the continent, and keep them to defend ourselves. Let Old England add to her wooden walls, by which she has ever proved herself mistress of the ocean, and shouted in the vast theatre of the globe, ‘ Britannia rules the waves.’

I would not be understood, from anything I have said, to lay our miscarriages at the door of the Right Honourable Gentleman ; I believe he inherits his illustrious father’s sentiments with regard to continental wars, insomuch that what one of our own poets said of a *quondam* great minister of France, may justly be applied to him,—

Peace is my delight, not Fleury’s more.

I believe he kept off war as long as in prudence he thought that he possibly could, and till he apprehended both justice and necessity compelled him to enter into it. But he has been unfortunate, things have turned out contrary to his expectation ; and I sadly fear, that unless the present system be abandoned, no change for the better can be expected. Under this persuasion, Sir, I give my hearty approbation of my worthy friend’s amendment.”

With regard to the awful condition of France, Sir Richard Hill well observed : “ I scruple not to affirm that the nation or the individual which has cast off all dependance on God, is in a condition of all others the

¹ When Sir Richard Hill used this expression, he did it with peculiar solemnity, and not with that deplorable flippancy which is, alas, so common.

most miserable, and sooner or later will feel the vengeance of that omnipotent arm which is set at defiance." At the same time, however, he gave this honest warning to his own countrymen: "I believe it is very possible for gentlemen to complain that there is no religion in France, who themselves are contented with a very moderate share of it in England. The Christian sabbath they lament is abolished by the introduction of the decaides, and yet themselves are hardly seen from Sunday to Sunday, within the walls of a church. O how are they shocked that the French should institute feasts similar to those of the Pagan deities, whilst they themselves on the sacred day which is set apart for Christian worship, assemble to pour copious libations to the jovial god of wine; but return no thanks either before or after the repast, to the bountiful hand by which they have been so liberally fed. Such, O Britain, are thy *believing* sons, and thus their *faith* shews itself by their works in honour of the present war, which they are now prosecuting with vigour in defence of good order, morality, and religion." I am not desirous of canvassing the political views of the author of this honest rebuke, or the wisdom or impolicey of a war which ended in the glory of Great Britain, and the downfall of the scourge of the nations; my object is to exhibit in its true and admirable colours, the character of the subject of my memoir. He spoke only the real sentiments of his upright mind, when he gave vent to the following sentence, which contained the real description of his own course of action. "This is not a time to talk of personal interests and connections. Every good member of parliament will be influenced by no interests or connections but those of his country at large, and neither lean to opposition or ministry, but as he is persuaded in

his own conscience, that opposition or ministry lean to the public good. "He will boldly speak his mind, neither courting smiles on the one hand, nor fearing frowns on the other." It was upon this principle that he always acted, and his sterling integrity must secure to his memory the respect it merits.

The increased refinement of the present age has ejected from the higher circles of society the fondness for "copious libations," of which Sir Richard Hill has just been quoted as complaining in his time. Drunkenness is banished from fashionable company, and aged men of rank are now reaping the moral and constitutional benefits of the abandonment of the practice, as is visible in the superior vigour of many a sexagenarian in the present century, over the decrepitude manifested by those who had in bygone days scarcely run through fifty years of the bottle and the bowl. The age of wigs, ruffles, gold lace, cocked-hats, formal bows, and hard drinking is gone, to return, it is imagined, no more. Hospitality is no longer measured by the quantity of wine consumed; nor does the refined and educated gentleman, whose bearing bespeaks birth and information, need those grotesque appendages to his person which are now no longer visible except in the portraits of his ancestors. An invitation like that sometimes sent in the olden time, would be an insult now:—"Mr. A. presents his compliments to Mr. B. and requests the honour of his company to dinner, *and to get drunk.*"¹ The social habits of man uncontrolled by religion, will not stand the test even of that *reason* which is his boast and pride. Fancy a party meeting in past times of powder and pomatum, and commencing with the utmost forma-

¹ A gentleman of family lately found amongst the old papers of an ancestor, an invitation in these very terms.

lity of bows and dignified reserve, and ending in the master's getting up and locking the door, and vowing that the company should not stir till some immense quantity of wine had been consumed, to the utter destruction of all sensible conversation, and of all the politeness with which the convives assembled ! Yet we are told that this practice was not uncommon, less than a hundred years ago ! Such, however, is the present change of our habits, that the description of such scenes appears scarcely credible. In truth, the whole mass of society has been more influenced than is supposed, by the progress of that religious light, the first rays of which were so unwelcome, as they broke through the cloud which cast its shadow over that shameless immorality, at which people did not blush because they did not see its deformity in darkness. But before religion can perform its great work upon the social system, it must not only send forth its brightness, but diffuse its fervour ; and then, as the former chased away the gloomy excesses of a past age, so will the latter expel the frigid, selfish *nonchalance*, which is too commonly thought fashionable now. There is nothing more lovely in this world, than cordial Christian intercourse adorned by the graces of refinement ; and the extent to which it prevails at the present moment, is one of the happiest symptoms of the day. It is no doubt much increased by the many religious meetings which take place throughout the kingdom, which bring pious men together with a common zeal to do good ; and the effect of their reunions in producing reciprocations of true kindness, is one great proof of the reflex blessings that will always result from efforts of Christian philanthropy.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“ THE GUIDE TO THE CHURCH.” CLERGY AND NONCONFORMISTS. SIR R. HILL’S “ APOLOGY FOR BROTHERLY LOVE.” HIS ATTACHMENT TO EPISCOPACY AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. HIS CHARITY, AND RESPECT FOR THE CONSCIENTIOUS VIEWS OF OTHERS. HIS HOPE OF CHRISTIAN UNITY FROM THE ASPECT OF THE TIMES. THE CHURCH. BISHOP HALL. THE LITURGY. BISHOP REYNOLDS ON THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH. SIR RICHARD HILL’S REMARKS ON THE STATE OF THE CLERGY. DISSIPATION OF THE TIMES. THE LITURGY AND EXTEMPORE PRAYERS. CONCLUSION OF THE APOLOGY. MR. DAUBENY’S “ APPENDIX TO HIS GUIDE.” “ REFORMATION TRUTH RESTORED.” CURIOUS ANECDOTE. REMARKS. CHARITY.

“ THE GUIDE TO THE CHURCH.’

SIR Richard Hill considered it a duty he owed to the Christian world, to endeavour to controvert the opinions contained in Daubeny’s *Guide to the Church*, a production which was sent forth towards the end of the last century, with the view of arresting the progress of *evangelical* opinions. He conceived that the doctrines contained in this work, were calculated to lower the establishment in the estimation of the people, if it were supposed that all its members acquiesced in them. He felt it also due to his friends Mr. Wilberforce and Mrs. Hannah More, whose sentiments were objected to by

Mr. Daubeny,¹ to avow his own entire concurrence in their views, and to defend them.

At the time when *The Guide to the Church* appeared, *evangelical* religion was beginning to take firm root in the establishment. The pious nonconformists hailed its increase with delight, and were desirous to cultivate with the zealous clergy a friendship based on true charity, without the least compromise on either side. Though differing in notions of church government, they all agreed as to the essentials of spiritual piety. Hence arose many creditable reciprocations of kindness between churchmen and nonconformists; nor is it the fault of the former, that they have not been augmented in proportion to the diffusion of their common principles. Recent demonstrations against that establishment, in devotedness to which the evangelical clergy are second to none of its members, have naturally engendered a well-founded distrust of persons, who have lost no opportunity of casting off the mask of compliment, and exhibiting the frowns of opposition. Yet most careful should we be to put no impediment in the way of the progress of vital truth, being assured that it will in time restore a happy equilibrium to Christian society, and bring back the blessedness of peace and love.²

But to return to Mr. Daubeny. After describing his views of episcopacy, and maintaining that in no case whatever any alteration in the external polity of the

¹ See his Letter to Mrs. Hannah More.

² For example; surely those good clergymen have been mistaken. who have on these accounts withdrawn from the Bible Society. That institution issues a stream of truth at the rate of three Bibles a minute! Can we, then, be justified in suffering any *feelings* of ours, to become a hindrance to this glorious flow of the Word of God?

Church was allowable, he came to this conclusion—
“That all who are out of the pale of the Church *thus established*, have no promise of salvation, but must be left to *the uncovenanted mercies of God*.” Such sentiments, coupled with the most unequivocal censure of those leading doctrines of the Reformation, to which attention was extensively aroused, and of which Sir Richard Hill had all his life been the defender, excited his strong disapprobation. He had therefore every excuse for replying to Mr. Daubeny, and for calling his own production *An Apology for Brotherly Love*. To prevent all misapprehension, he declared himself in the preface, “a steady member of the Church of England,” and assured his readers, that as far as Mr. Daubeny’s profession of love for the doctrines of that Church went, he “met him with open arms;” but he confessed that “a mighty difference” existed between them in the mode of interpreting those doctrines. He was also desirous to assert his right as a layman, to form and announce his own opinions on questions of theology, agreeing with Dr. Knox, that it is “every man’s concern and his duty, to study it according to his abilities and opportunity.” And well indeed would it be for the truth, if a similar spirit animated the laity in general; since one of the great trials of zealous ministers, is the melancholy want of interest in religious knowledge manifested by numbers of well-educated men, whose information, accurate and refined upon things relating to time, is often far below that of many of their inferiors, on the all-important matters which refer to eternity. There are noble examples to the contrary, thanks be to God, in this our day of wide-spread inquiry; but while we deplore the multitudes of poor who are ignorant of the way of life, we may justly extend our lamentations to a similar defect in a

very great body of the lettered and the wealthy ; who can converse luminously on almost every topic but the one which involves their highest duty here, and their unchangeable destiny in another state of existence.

The seriousness of mind with which Sir Richard Hill wrote his *Apology for Brotherly Love*, is evinced in the concluding paragraph of his preface. "For my own part," he said, "I glory in bearing this, most probably my dying testimony in behalf of that pure religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which has been my only support in the house of my pilgrimage, for a great number of years, under various trials of various kinds ; and feeling as I do, that this earthly tabernacle must soon be put off, I am the more anxious to declare the whole counsel of God ; neither do I count my reputation, or even my life itself, dear to me, so that I may be found faithful, and finish my course with joy." The work itself consists of seven letters to Mr. Daubeny, and at the end of the book is a sermon, from John vi. 37, preached at Paul's Cross, by Bishop Babington. He said to Mr. Daubeny in the first letter, "neither do I think any excuse can be expected from me for addressing these letters to you, after the severe and pointed attack against myself, which I find in your late publication. I might, however, have treated that attack with the same silent pity and contempt that I did on a former occasion, had not the blow been repeated from so respectable a hand as your own, which causes it to come with a force which at once sensibly hurts my own feelings, is calculated to wound still deeper my religious principles, and to injure what little influence I may have to do good among my fellow creatures. But, I assure you, Sir, that I feel still more the stab you have given to your excellent mother, the Church of England, than the

arrows which you have shot against me as an individual." In explanation also of the object of his taking up his pen, Sir Richard Hill added, "As I must ever esteem the doctrines of our Church to be of greater consequence than her walls, I shall take but little notice of what you have advanced, however large a part of your performance it has taken up, on the subject of *externals*, confining myself principally to the defence of those evangelical truths, which have borne the test of so many ages, stood the shock of so many heretical earthquakes, and like the ark of Noah, risen triumphantly above all storms and billows which threatned their overthrow, either from avowed enemies without, or from false brethren within: for, as our Lord asked the Pharisees of old, 'Whether is greater, the gold, or the temple which sanctifieth the gold?' so permit me to inquire which is of most consequence, the outward polity of the Church, or those sacred verities for the sake of which that outward polity was instituted? If the clothing of the king's daughter was of *wrought gold*, yet her grand excellence consisted in this, that she was *all glorious within*." After some other remarks on the positions taken by his opponent, lest he should be misconstrued, he proceeded, "As a member of the Church of England, I avow my sincere attachment to that Church, in doctrine, in constitution, and in discipline. I believe her to be the most pure and apostolical Church upon earth, and therefore I communicate with her, and with her only. I pray for an increase of her borders and faithful ministers, and that all who attend her worship 'may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.' These, Sir, are my real sentiments as a Christian and a Churchman." After this statement, and the assurance

of his full concurrence in the episcopal form of church government established in this kingdom, Sir Richard Hill conceived that he had a right to protest against being considered as a *schismatic*, because he respected the conscientious opinions of men of other denominations, and was willing to extend the right hand of fellowship to nonconformists of piety, candour, and moderation. He desired to see the spirit of bigotry and intolerance laid low, and that of peace, love, and universal good-will rising in its stead. "This benign and amiable spirit" he considered that Mr. Daubeney would "re-mand to the shades, and again call up that meagre, narrow-minded spectre, whose whole employment is to stalk over Christendom, in order to affright the timid and ignorant, and to set the whole household of faith together by the ears." He then continued, in a strain that marks the happy frame which was ripening him in his declining days, for a world of perfect love, "O blessed day, when the only contention among the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, shall be who shall love him most and serve him best. This day, however, from the great revival of religion both among churchmen and dissenters, I humbly trust is about to dawn upon us, and even now is piercing through the black clouds of infidelity and profaneness which lately threatened to burst over our Sion, but which nothing can more effectually tend to retard, than the creation of jealousies, envyings, and heart-burnings among those whose souls should ever unite in that song of the heavenly host, 'glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good-will towards men.' "

With these views, it was not likely that Sir Richard Hill should coincide with Mr. Daubeney, in his giving over all who belonged to any Church not constituted as

ours is, to the *uncovenanted mercies of God*. And he asked him whether Bishop Hall, whom he so much commended in his "Guide" as the firm friend of episcopacy, would have crossed the sea to the Synod of Dort to sit in a convention, and to unite in examining the opinions sent forth by the members of the university of Leyden, with Arminius at their head, if he had looked upon the deputies of the various churches then assembled, who differed from him in notions of Church government, in the light of hereties to be condemned with such a censure as this? On the contrary, he quoted the entirely different persuasion of this great and admirable man, from his treatise on the beauty and unity of the Church. "The Church is *columba una*—one dove; whether ye consider it as the aggregation of the outward visible churches of Christian professors, or as the inward, secret, universal company of the elect, it is still *one*. To begin with the former, what is here below that makes the Church one? One Lord, one faith, one baptism. Where these are truly professed to be, though there may be differences of administration and ceremonies; though there may be differences of opinions, yet there is *columba una*; all those are but diversely coloured feathers of the same dove. Whatever Church, therefore, hath one Lord, Jesus Christ the righteous; one faith in that Lord; one baptism into that faith, it is the one dove of Christ; to speak more short, one faith abridges all." At the same time, however, that Sir Richard Hill approved the sentiments thus strikingly expressed by this eminent prelate, and stated his firm belief that Churches whose respective polities differed from ours, were not to be condemned on that account, if sound in the faith and not constituted in a way directly opposed to Christ's positive commands, he was most desirous to

repeat his unalterable opinion of the superior excellence of our own ecclesiastical constitution. While also he placed the acceptable worship of God in spirituality, he was anxious to declare his unqualified commendation of our liturgy, as compared with the extempore prayers of the dissenters, which he could not approve : “ I would say a few words more, relative to these only spiritual worshippers in the true Church, and observe, that although it is their high privilege to pour out their hearts before God in secret prayer, in that way, and in those words which may best suit their particular cases, yet I am decidedly of opinion with you, that in the public congregation, a scriptural form is far superior to any extempore effusions whatever ; and I know of none equal to the excellent liturgy of our Church—so sound, so devout, so plain and simplified, yet suited to the different states and conditions of the believer, under his various trials and exigencies, and not liable to be *deformed*¹ by graceless, weak, or empty ministers, in a way which frequently disgusts or hurts the feelings of a congregation, where only extempore prayer is used, and where, when one sentence is finished, we know not

¹ It is not uncommon with dissenters to call our forms *crutches*. Watts considered that they *stinted* the Spirit. This remark drew from the pen of the late Samuel Wesley, an epigram, the first and last stanzas of which were these :

Form stunts the Spirit, Watts has said,
And therefore it is wrong ;
At best a crutch the weak to aid,
A cumbrance to the strong.

E'en Watts a form for praise can choose,
For prayer who throws it by,
Crutches to *walk* he can refuse,
But uses them to *fly* !

whether we can conscieutiously join in the next. But when I say this, I neither condemn those who may differ from me, nor see any reason why, before or after the sermon, a short occasional prayer for a blessing on the word preached, may not be used when the preacher has grace and ability."

Sir Richard Hill considered that the *unity* of Christ's Church on earth consisted, not in a unity of externals alone, but in a moral unity of hearts and minds among its members. In this he followed the view of the celebrated Bishop Reynolds, who looked upon this moral unity as fourfold—unity of faith in the great and necessary doctrines of salvation—unity of obedience—unity in worship, that is, in the substantials of worship—unity in ends and designs. "So that where the fundamentals of religion are safe, and on all sides unanimously embraced, and the differences purely *problematical*, and such as do not at all endanger the vitals and essentials of religion, mutual meekness, tenderness, and forbearance are to be used as amongst brethren and fellow-members. Disputes are to be managed with all calmness of spirit, without passion, animosity, exasperation, invidious consequences, or anything tending to the violation of brotherly love. Hereby we preserve the communion of saints, when we own one another as brethren and not as strangers: we credit the gospel of peace, and adorn our mutual profession of the same common truth. We make way to the more clear discovery of truth, when no passion or prejudice doth dazzle our eyes or overcloud our judgments. We stop the mouths, prevent the insultations, and take away the advantages which the common adversary promiseth to himself, by our differences and dissensions." It was a spirit of true charity which induced Sir Richard Hill

and others, to manifest a friendly feeling towards all devout men by whatever name they were called, or from whatever nation they came, in the persuasion that they honestly desired the interest of the Saviour's kingdom. Nor are the friends of the Church in these days, to be accused of being deficient in the same Christian love, because they stand aloof from dissenters, who are not content to pursue only this great end, but publicly declare that they desire the overthrow of an establishment, which these churchmen believe to be of all others the best calculated to promote the predominant object of their labours, their hopes, and their prayers. But such dissenters may reply that they war not with good men, but with the abstract principle of an establishment, and that they desire a friendly co-operation with its pious sons. Here, however, the question naturally arises, whether it is possible to be on confidential terms with bodies of persons, whose union with the champions of the very popish and sceptical opinions, they ask for the concurrence of churchmen to oppose, is such a flagrant violation of all that has hitherto been called by the name of consistency? It is difficult to understand what that term means, if it can be applied to men who combat vital errors with one hand and caress them with the other. Could we but see a real spirit of love for the great doctrines of the gospel pervading non-conformists, and refusing all amalgamation with those who are arrayed against them, they would find in churchmen the same affectionate spirit, that adorned the latter days of Sir Richard Hill and his friends.

In his second and third letters to Mr. Daubeny, Sir Richard Hill vindicated the statements of Mr. Wilberforce on the leading doctrines of the gospel, and declared his own. It will not be necessary to en-

large upon the latter, as they are already made known in other parts of this volume. The fourth letter was occupied by remarks on the unfairness, with which Mr. Daubeny had given quotations from his various works, and the wrong inferences he had drawn from them. In the fifth, Sir Richard deplored the doctrines and practice of a great body of the clergy of his times. He complained of the cold manner in which too many of them were accustomed to deliver their sermons, and the want of close affectionate application to the conscience, as well as the neglect of careful instruction in the first principles of Christianity, and the lack of experimental divinity. "And now, Sir," he said, "however disagreeable the task, however painful the assertion, I must dare to affirm that the lives of the generality of the clergy are not such as they ought to be, nor such as are likely to strike and influence the laity to believe they have their salvation seriously at heart." He disclaimed, however, all intention of imputing to them in these remarks, any lack of morality; but he continued—"I am fearful that the greater part of them want that purity, that zeal, that heavenly-mindedness, that deadness to the world, that savour of divine and spiritual things, which ought to be visible in all the deportment of those who watch over immortal souls, and who must very soon give account of their stewardship before the Judge of quick and dead." It is impossible not to concur in the mild rebuke of the ministers of his time, conveyed in this sentence, as well as in the next. "Were all our clergy really followers of Him who went about doing good, and were they indeed striving to walk as Christ also walked, we should not find them at places of public diversion, at horse-races, balls, assemblies, &c. &c. neither would they suffer their families, carriages, and

servants to be seen at these haunts of dissipation ; and when visiting from house to house in an amicable, hospitable way, which is by no means inconsistent with a minister's duty or character, instead of accepting a seat at the card-table, they would endeavour, as occasion might offer, to give a serious turn to the conversation, and so to make themselves useful, even when discharging the common offices of friendship and politeness, never unmindful of the Apostle's injunction, " whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Sir Richard Hill, after making these observations, to which he hoped the consciences of many would respond, acknowledged that he did not expect to escape censure. " The same expressions," he observed to Mr. Daubeny, "*of railing against the clergy of the establishment* which you have thrown out against Mr. Wilberforce, will much more be brought against me. But permit me to say that the accusation will not be founded in truth. I honour the clergy, and I honour their office ; but the more I do this, the more I lament, even the least inconsistency amongst those who in all things are called upon to be ensamples of the flock of Christ." In all these explanatory sentences, we have an evidence of his desire to be faithful without harshness ; and in another paragraph we have an awful picture of the period at which he wrote. " If after all, it should be thought that anything I have said bears too hard on the bulk of the established clergy, I know of no better method of removing the stigma or imputation, than by uniting our prayers, that the clergy in general, especially the bishops, may distinguish themselves at this critical juncture by every method in their power, to stop that foaming torrent of irreligion, profaneness, and contempt of all order, good government, and subordination, which has for some time past, been coming in

upon us like a flood. And I am certain they cannot do this more effectually, than by diligently exerting themselves in the restoration of those pure principles, by which the Reformation was happily effected among us ; and which, in proportion as they prevailed, spread light, life, true religion, and practical holiness among all ranks and degrees of people. Were those evangelical principles universally inculcated, the only true morality, which is the effect of God's love to us, would increase and abound. We should soon see an end put to Sunday feastings, Sunday concerts, Sunday idle visitings, Sunday buying and selling, and particularly that flagrant violation of the Sabbath, Sunday travelling. Happy am I to see that our most gracious and amiable King and Queen, have for some time past put a stop to Sunday drawing-rooms."

In the last letter, Sir Richard Hill combated the imputations east upon the friends of evangelical doctrine by Mr. Daubeny, who calls them "schismatics without knowing it ;" and he considered the appellation much more applicable from the words of the 110th Canon, to such as are "hinderers" of the truth, and "defenders of popish and erroneous doctrine." He expressed in the appendix, the regret he felt for the necessity of thus addressing Mr. Daubeny, in these words : "As it is by no means a time for any of us to fall out by the way, I cannot but express the concern I feel for the necessity which you have imposed upon me, to offer these pages to the public eye. Had you, Sir, drawn your masterly pen with the pacific and conciliating spirit of the present Bishop of Llandaff ;¹ had you attempted to point out to us the peculiar genius and leading excellences of our

¹ Dr. Watson.

most holy faith ; or had you, like another Wilberforce, nobly endeavoured to raise the members of our National Church, from that wretched state of dull and torpid indifference to all religion, into which so many have fallen, I should have had much greater satisfaction in coming forward as your admirer and friend, than I can possibly have in this character of a defensive and unwilling opponent."

In answer to Sir Richard Hill's Apology for Brotherly Love, Mr. Daubeny compiled two octavo volumes, which he called an " Appendix to the Guide to the Church." They contained nine letters addressed to Sir Richard Hill, in which he maintained the positions and opinions opposed in the " Apology." He repeated also his disapprobation of the doctrines of Mr. Wilberforce and Mrs. Hannah More, although he allowed that they were deserving of much personal respect, which nevertheless made their *unsoundness* the more lamentable.

This called forth a reply from the pen of Sir Richard Hill, entitled " Reformation Truth Restored ;" and the quotation from Bishop Hall selected for the motto of this book, will shew his view of the spirit in which that of his opponent was written—" You speak with much spite and no truth ; what hath our Church to do with errors of universal grace and free-will ? Errors which her articles do flatly oppose. What shamelessness is this ?" ¹ As is the case, however, with all similar controversy, he said, they were only writing for their own amusement, or to torment reviewers, and without the smallest hope of converting one another. Yet he observed, in his own humorous way, on Mr. Daubeny's couple of octavos, which occupied the author full fifteen

¹ Bishop Hall to the Brownists.

months, that after the mountain had been in labour all that time, it would be unkind and disrespectful not to notice at all the two poor *Church mice* that had crept out. Upon one point he made very serious remonstrance in these words ;—“ I complain of your representing me as inimical to our most excellent ecclesiastical establishment, notwithstanding all I have said in my *Apology* of my *steady* attachment to it, as well in constitution as in doctrine ; and notwithstanding both in town and country, throughout the whole year, I attend the regular ministry of the clergy of the Church of England, and receive the communion from their hands, and from no others, and have part of the Church service, with a portion of Scripture, daily read by a clergyman in my family.” Sir Richard Hill did not consider an interchange of kindness with pious dissenters, any proof of hostility to the Church : nor will any man of liberal mind take it in this light ; and it is only to be most devoutly wished, that the happy days of unity and love may return in all their brightness and beauteous calm, when the agitation of the elements shall cease in the Christian world.

In the course of his strictures on Mr. Daubeny's appendix to his “ Guide,” Sir Richard Hill related the following anecdote :—He happened once to be in the company of three extraordinary persons in very different ways—the Earl of Chesterfield, the Countess of Huntingdon, and Mrs. Macaulay. Lady Huntingdon, with her usual zeal, endeavoured to introduce the subject of serious religion, which Mrs. Macaulay continually avoided by bringing in her own favourite views of republicanism. She launched out into rapturous commendations of the Romans, the Lacedæmonians, the laws of Lycurgus, and the praise bestowed on them by

Xenophon. Lord Chesterfield, equally uneasy at the mention of either of these topics, still maintained his politeness, though longing all the while for an opportunity to slip away without any breach of good manners. He praised beyond measure the historical knowledge and ingenuity of Mrs. Macaulay; and passed the most flattering encomiums on the zeal, piety, and character of Lady Huntingdon. "Ah," said the latter, "it is for want of your Lordship's knowing me more perfectly, that you speak of me in such flattering terms; for I am conscious that I am nothing better than a poor, vile, miserable, sinful creature, such as can only hope to be saved by free sovereign grace, and without any merit of my own to recommend me to the divine favour." This sincere rejection of the flattery of the Earl, gave him the desired opportunity of escaping from the seat of thorns, on which his courtesy had so long kept him. He rose, made a most profound bow, and retired with these characteristic words—"I never yet was in any room or company where I could stay and hear the excellent Lady Huntingdon abused. I am therefore under the immediate necessity of bidding your Ladyship good morrow. Mrs. Macaulay, your most obedient."

With this anecdote and a quotation I shall close my notice of this controversy, as my object is, I trust, attained, which was not to augment the number of my pages by a reiteration of arguments often stated and often replied to, but to shew that Sir Richard Hill was cordially attached to the National Church established amongst us. This invaluable establishment has seldom had three more consistent members than himself, Mr. Wilberforce, and Mrs. Hannah More; and Mr. Daubeny, in attacking the class of persons to which they belonged, was certainly inflicting a serious

blow upon the defenders of institutions he professed to uphold. How he could ever have suffered his pen to trace a passage like this addressed to Sir Richard Hill, is perfectly unaccountable—"You and your friend Mr. Wilberforce—for now I understand you both speak the same language—seem perfectly agreed in decrying good works."¹ The author of the *Practical Christianity* decrying good works! But after reading such a sentence as this, no one can be surprised that the same man should have construed kindness to pious dissenters into enmity to the Church. The true interests of the establishment are little indeed understood, by men who would impede the genial flow of Christian charity, by freezing up its waters into the ice of frigid *high churchmanship*, and thus check the current of that stream which pours over the whole Christian community, the blessings of beauty and fruitfulness. Kindred to them in spirit, are the theologians, if they deserve the name, who would fain give the efficacy to the form which belongs to the spirit, and bring into the sanctuary the idolatry of a creature element, instead of impressing upon every mind the emptiness of any outward sign, unless it is accompanied by the renovating grace of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The following passage in the last letter of Sir Richard Hill to Mr. Daubeny, will shew how much he considered the spirit of our Church opposed to anything like bigotry or coldness, towards other religious communities who maintain their principles with meekness and love.

"When your rigid ideas of denying the name of churches, to all Protestants who are not under episcopalian jurisdiction, and to account as schismatics many

¹ Letter VI. of his Appendix, p. 333.

who are, would urge you not to look upon them as members of that mystical body, whereof Christ himself is the head, and even to exclude them out of the vineyard, you would do well to consider the honour which God is pleased to put upon many of them, and in what indelible words the characters of true Christians are written upon them; this would cause you to love them as brethren, and to give them the right hand of fellowship, as those who are united to you in spirit, though differing from you in some external forms of worship and church government; lamenting, if you please, their scruples and prejudices against full conformity with that excellent establishment, in which you have the honour of being a minister, and I a member.

“It is true the canons of our Church do denominate all dissenters with the harsh appellation of schismatics; but then we are to reflect that those canons, besides having never been sanctioned by authority, were compiled at a time when the polity of the national church was in its infancy, and when disputes were beginning to run very high between episcopalians and puritans; but since the Toleration Act, dissenters are as much protected by the laws of the land as churchmen themselves; and the very design of many of the canons and laws to enforce conformity, no longer existing, we and they are more one than at any period previous to the Revolution.

“Think not, Sir, that I wish to object against the proper exercise of ecclesiastical jurisdiction; there must be laws and subordination in the Church, as well as the State, to which all true Christians are bound to submit; it is the divine command, “Let all things be done decently and in order;” the reins of discipline may be held with too lax a hand, as well as by one that is too tight;

and as much or more mischief may ensue from unrestrained enthusiasm and petulant ignorance, as from uncurbed profaneness, error, or infidelity. This is so self-evident a truth, and the difficulty of sifting our facts so very great, that I do not wonder that, upon many occasions, our present Church governors have been at a loss how to act, whilst they were earnestly wishing that their conduct should be regulated by the sacred laws of religion and candour.

“Want of moderation, however, becomes less and less the fault of the day, and whilst the sceptre of love, rather than the rod of iron, rules both in Church and State, we may be sure that esteem and respect will always be the returns of ingenuous minds for liberality and benignity; and so, under God, secure peace and safety, acquiescence, and lasting harmony amongst us; whilst opposition, violence, and oppression against the rights of conscience, and of private judgment, have always brought on feuds and convulsions, which have frequently ended in the overthrow of what they were meant to support.”

Thus moderately, yet firmly, did Sir Richard Hill maintain his principles as a churchman, while he regarded others with that charity which every man is bound to extend to his neighbour. But if he had lived in these days, he would have seen the necessity of proving that charity, while it looks with tenderness on imperfections that may be considered venial, cannot wink at flagrant inconsistencies. This very principle of *love* of that which is good, recoils from all that is palpably evil. Can the charity which has shewn courtesy to the nonconformist, who declared his zeal for the great truths of the gospel to be the only actuating principle of his exertions, and professed the warmest affection for all

who were of the like mind, forget equal professions of admiration from the same quarter, of worldly opinions and political demonstrations calculated to sever the best bonds of society, and to cast down or disfigure our noblest institutions? This were to suppose that charity, because it “hopeth all things,” is necessarily devoid of all sagacity, and that it has totally overlooked the Saviour’s command respecting the wisdom of the serpent, as well as the gentleness of the dove. Charity is guileless and patient, but not blind.

CHAPTER XIX.

GENEROSITY OF SIR RICHARD HILL. CONDUCT OF TWO EMIGRANT PRIESTS. CORRESPONDENCE WITH BISHOP PORTEUS RESPECTING IT. SUNDAY NEWSPAPERS. BILL TO PREVENT BULL-BAITING. SIR RICHARD HILL'S LETTER TO MR. WINDHAM. OPPOSITION TO THE BILL. LETTERS FROM MAGISTRATES AND CLERGYMEN ON THE SUBJECT. THE TOWN RING. BULLDOGS. REMARKS. SCARCITY. LETTERS OF SIR RICHARD HILL TO A CLERGYMAN, TO MR. WILBERFORCE, AND MR. ADDINGTON.

FRENCH EMIGRANTS.

THE charity of Sir Richard Hill was not confined to expressions of kind feeling towards good men of every name and degree, but was visible in constant acts of benevolence. His exertions and his bounty were always at the service of those who needed and deserved them. Several French emigrants received from him the most generous treatment, and were welcomed with the truest hospitality to his table. Some of these he had known abroad, and they found in him, when distress drove them to our shores, a true Christian friend, who, though a zealous Protestant, knew how to call Roman Catholics "neighbours" in the Scriptural acceptation of the term. At the same time, however, that he was willing to relieve the personal necessities of every man, upon the principle

that Christian charity in succouring the needy, has reference not to their errors but to their necessities, he viewed with a jealous vigilance all attempts of the French Papists to make proselytes amongst those whose hospitality had found them an asylum in this country. The following correspondence between him and the Bishop of London proves the truth of this assertion, while it affords a melancholy example of the way in which too many of the sons of Popery are wont to requite kindness or concessions.

To the Lord Bishop of London.

Harley-street, Jan. 1, 1799.

MY LORD,

I did myself the honour of calling at your Lordship's door, in St. James's-square, about three weeks ago, in-order to have communicated to you a piece of intelligence, with which I thought it right that you should be acquainted, submitting it, however, to your Lordship's judgment to take notice of it or not as you might think proper. I find, my Lord, that some French emigrant priests are very busy in trying to make religious converts in the metropolis. There are many of these ecclesiastics about ——. Two of them lodged with a decent elderly woman near that place, who used constantly to attend the service of our Church at ———, where the excellent Mr. ——— is minister. To his surprise, she discontinued coming, and sent to Mr. ——— requesting to speak with him. He found the poor creature distressed beyond all description, and she owned that in an illness which she had lately had, her two lodgers had been talking with her, and had possessed her mind with the persuasion

that whilst she remained in communion with the Church of England, she was assuredly in a state of d——n. All Mr. —— could say had no effect whatever. She professed herself a convert to the Romish faith, but has found so little comfort in it, that she twice made attempts to destroy herself, but was providentially prevented from accomplishing her design.

Now, my good Lord, I leave this unhappy business before you, not doubting but you will act in such a way as you think most conducive to put a stop, at least to any further external attempts of these two Popish priests, to make proselytes by creeping into houses, and leading captive silly women. No doubt the men themselves think they are doing a very meritorious act; but surely they ought to know that whilst they are here under the protection of government, if they do not behave themselves in such a manner as to create no disturbance in Church or State, they have forfeited all right to the safety and privileges they enjoy, and will be dealt with as offenders against the peace and good order of the nation. They may indeed call this persecution, but as they cannot be ignorant of the conditions on which they have an asylum in this country, by breaking these conditions, they render themselves liable to be sent out of it.

I take the liberty of sending the enclosed little piece¹ for your Lordship's perusal. I believe it is now quite out of print. If you think it might be useful as it is, or if your Lordship will have the goodness to make any alterations or additions to it, I shall be happy to adopt them. It was drawn up at the urgent request of a pious lady of high rank in this city, who intended to copy it

¹ His Letter to a Friend, &c.

from the manuscript, and then to give it in her own hand-writing to a female friend of hers, who had spared no pains to bring her over to Popery. The letter, however, was never given to the Roman Catholic lady, but I have reason to think it was by God's blessing made eminently useful to her noble Protestant friend, whose mind had been a good deal unsettled by the conversations she had had with that lady and the priests. The letter not having been sent according to the original intention, I published it at the time, and in the form in which it is now submitted to your Lordship.

I sincerely beg pardon for having trespassed so long on your Lordship's time, and have the honour to be, my Lord, with the highest possible respect and esteem, &c.

[RICHARD HILL.]

To this letter the worthy Bishop Porteus thus replied :—

Fulham, Jan. 3, 1799.

SIR,

The conduct of the two emigrant priests at -, which you have represented to me, is certainly very culpable, and must be taken notice of. I propose, God willing, to remove to London in the course of the next week, and will make proper inquiries what will be the most advisable mode of proceeding. In the meanwhile, I must request the favour of you to acquaint me with the names and place of residence of the two priests, that I may, when properly prepared, send for them.

I return you many thanks for the little tract you were so good as to send me, which I will read with care ; and will beg leave to recommend to you a small pamphlet

written by the late Archbishop Secker, called *A Brief Confutation of the Errors of Popery*, which is excellent, and might be of great use in quieting the mind of the poor woman you mention, which has been so cruelly disturbed.

I am, Sir, with great respect,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

B. LONDON.

Just before his correspondence with this upright Prelate, Sir Richard Hill sent the following remonstrance to the editors of a well-known periodical who proposed to publish a Sunday paper :—

GENTLEMEN,

I was duly favoured with your very polite note, for which be pleased to accept my best thanks. The chief reason of my now troubling you is, that I may freely express my sentiments on the subject of your new Sunday paper, at which, when I first saw it advertised, I own I was much concerned ; especially when I considered that the grand design of the paper was to contradict French principles, which in nothing have been more apparent than in making no distinction between the Sabbath and other days. Now, though I would be far from saying that the publication of a Sunday paper necessarily does this, yet sure whatever might give offence to conscientious men ought to be avoided, especially where a charge of inconsistency would certainly be brought forward, not to mention that the very idea of buying and reading a Sunday paper, would be exceedingly unwelcome to all persons of a serious character ; consequently the sale of it would be very trifling indeed among those into

whose hands you would most wish it to fall, to say nothing of the grating, offensive, irreligious sound of the hawkers on that day which it has pleased God to set apart for his own immediate service. On these accounts, it would afford me and many others much satisfaction if the worthy editors of the ———, instead of suffering the paper to be sent abroad on a Sunday, would follow the example of Mr. Addison, who generally published a number of the Spectator on a Saturday evening, in which he was careful that there should always be somewhat of a pious or moral tendency, if it was not directly on some evangelical subject.

From my wishes that your paper may have both circulation and credit, I have taken the liberty to suggest these plain hints, which I am persuaded you will excuse, and receive as they are meant, from, gentlemen,

Yours most faithfully, &c.

RICHARD HILL.

Nothing can be more courteous than this honest remonstrance, the subject of which Sir Richard Hill could not help bringing before the notice of the Bishop of London. In the letter to his Lordship, containing further particulars respecting the woman disturbed by the emigrant priests, he says, "I hear from good authority, that there are not less than a thousand men employed about the different Sunday newspapers." The same feeling which drew these observations from the worthy subject of this memoir, pervades with equal intensity many a pious mind at this moment, and has called forth much honest exertion. Amidst the various facts which have arisen to give strength to such efforts, none is more remarkable, than that in no instance has any influential person, who has determined to give those in his em-

ploy the benefit of the great day of rest, been a loser in a worldly point of view ; but an evident blessing of Providence has accompanied the apparent sacrifice. If worldly minds will adopt no other reasoning, they may learn that the way of God's commandments is the road to honour, knowledge, and prosperity, which nations and individuals alike hold by a tenure, that nothing but the observance of what the Lord himself has ordained, will be found to secure. What those countries have suffered where the Sabbath is neglected, might, if men were not blind, be a lesson to the whole earth. The sentiments of Sir Richard on these and other practices little suited to a Christian community, were sure to lead to his anxious exertion as a true patriot, to remove them all as far as possible. It will not, therefore, be any matter of surprise that he should have cordially supported the bill for the prevention of the barbarous diversion of bull-baiting, which, as is well known, was opposed by Mr. Windham. He addressed a characteristic remonstrance to this gentleman in the shape of a small pamphlet, to which he appended some verses, together with an address in rhyme, supposed to have been spoken by a Salopian bull.

In these days, it seems almost impossible to credit the extent to which the brutal practice of bull-baiting was once carried on in this country, nor could Mr. Windham have been thoroughly informed upon the subject, when as a minister of state, he opposed in his place in Parliament the efforts made to suppress it. He confessed that he had never seen more than two bull-baitings, and those when he was a school-boy ! He had, therefore, not sufficient knowledge of that sport in all its barbarity, to form a competent judgment respecting the evils it occasioned. Besides, the evidence on which the bill was

founded was not brought fully before the House by its supporters, from a reluctance to make known generally, that scenes so revolting were to be witnessed in this reformed Christian land. It was hoped that the abstract question would have met with the sanction of all enlightened members of the British Parliament. But it was the temper of the times to cast the terms of "*cant* and hypocrisy," as Sir Richard Hill observed "against whatever had the least tendency to stop the violent torrent of corruption of manners, and to introduce anything which wore the aspect of religious seriousness." "They," he also said, "who will not swim with the stream, must be contented to hear and bear" such reproaches; a feeling which will be fully appreciated, and an example that will be patiently imitated by all who are in these days, ready to bear the censures of their fellow men for the sake of advancing, though by slow degrees, the cause of true piety.

Sir Richard Hill, however, made every possible excuse for the conduct of Mr. Windham, with that spirit of charity he was always ready to stretch to its utmost bounds. "I am persuaded, Sir," said he, "that your own disposition is far remote from everything that is akin to barbarity and inhumanity, and that the language you have held, that the war in which we have been so long engaged, was not only in defence of life and property, but of *religion* and *morality*, would have prevented you from opening your lips in favour of a practice, which, as far as it extends, is totally subversive of those blessings, did you know the evils which have resulted from it." Certain it is, that Mr. Windham could not have been fully informed of the cruelties practised on those dreadful occasions; for the very day after the debate on the bill against bull-baiting, he advocated the

instantaneous mode of putting oxen to death by piercing the spinal marrow at the back of the head, instead of the repeated blows of the hammer, so frequent in this country. The fact was, that in common with many others, he considered a disuse of the various *sports* among the common people, as tending to destroy their hardihood and bravery. Time has, however, proved that religious education, and the decline of such recreations, have a tendency to produce a contrary effect, and that courage does not result from a relish for coarse and barbarous pastimes. The amiable disposition of Mr. Windham drew him in one direction, while his prejudice against the "system," as he called the humanizing efforts of the *Methodists*, impelled him in another. Hence, as Sir Richard Hill told him, "almost every sentence he advanced, contradicted that which immediately preceded it." Courage was confounded with cruelty, manliness with ferocity, and barbarity with martial valour. Thus his prejudice misled even the able and the generous opponent of the bill. The reply, however, of Mr. Sheridan, sufficiently exposed the weakness of his arguments, and Sir Richard Hill wittily called on him to sympathize with the poor bulls, in recollection of how he was *baited* and *pinned* to the treasury bench "by an arch bull-dog of the *Brinslean* species."

Amongst the champions of humanity to dumb animals, the old opponent of Sir Richard Hill, Mr. Daubeny, came forward zealously. He preached and printed a sermon on the subject, which Sir Richard cordially recommended, and expressed his satisfaction at the opportunity afforded him of declaring his sincere assent to what was advanced in that discourse, notwithstanding their former differences of opinion.

It is almost impossible to conceive the atrocious

scenes which took place at one time in this kingdom, during the prevalence of bull-baiting. A series of letters was printed by Sir Richard Hill, which had been received from clergymen and Magistrates, giving details of occurrences upon these occasions in their various districts. They describe in appalling terms the sufferings of the infuriated bulls, and the mad excitement of the common people, as well as the terrible effects upon their habits and manners. Yet the friends of the bill were told that they had no right to interfere with the amusements of the lower orders—that “no set of men had a better right to dispose of their time and their money as they thought proper, than the labouring poor.” This notion, so applied, has happily long ceased amongst the best friends of the peasantry of our nation; and while they are forbidden that which tends to inflict misery on the brute creation, efforts are made to set before them the way of true happiness and genuine liberty. It will generally be found that the advocates of demoralizing recreations among the poor, have been the opponents of education, which alone can open to them the resources of true enjoyment, and make them ashamed of those barbarous excesses which at one time prevailed, to the almost total exclusion of a right tone of moral, and much more of religious feeling. The poor man who has learnt to read his bible will no longer take pleasure in a bull-baiting, a cock-fight, or a boxing match; and should any gentleman now be seen engaged in the enjoyment of such spectacles, though he might not be ashamed of himself, the cottager would be ashamed of him. A wide field is now opened to the lower orders for all that is rational in the way of information or pleasure, and useful as respects encouragement to the exercise of provident habits; and if these advantages are based upon a

knowledge of religion and its duties, a day of comfort is dawning upon them; if not, the clouds will soon gather, the hour of the storm will come, and all that humanity has sown, must be swept away in its first budding, like the tender blades of a corn-field in a winter's flood.

There is no limit to the mischievous excitement of which man, without the knowledge and power of religious restraint, may easily be made the subject, and not unfrequently the victim. Ignorance of God nurtures the evil passions, whose element is darkness. In these days when the diffusion of light has put, in some measure at least, to open shame, the practices Sir Richard Hill so strenuously exerted himself to prevent, the lengths to which they were carried in moments of unfeeling and thoughtless heat, can scarcely be imagined. An extract or two from the letters before mentioned, will shew the good reasons he had for what he stated respecting the *sport* of bull-baiting, and will enable us to form a grateful contrast of our own times with those under consideration. A magistrate of a county in which these cruelties were very common, wrote to him thus: "The facts which I shall state, have occurred within my own knowledge. To give you a minute detail of every act of cruelty, would require a folio volume; I shall therefore confine myself to a few of such as appear to me of the most flagrant nature. This disgraceful practice of bull-baiting is now carried to the utmost extent of ferocity and barbarism. Many instances have lately occurred of their not being content with the agonies suffered by the bull while baiting, but these have been increased by the application of pepper, salt, &c. upon the lacerated parts of the animal. Their tails, ears, and tongues have been torn away, their horns broken so as

to emit large quantities of blood ; and in short they have been so completely bruised and mangled, day after day, as to render them incapable of taking any food, or even water, till at last, exhausted by fatigue and pain, they have died under an insupportable and unpitied weight of agony. Not long since, a woman was killed by a bull, notwithstanding which its inhuman pursuers continued to bait him with their wonted avidity." In the same county, he also stated, bull-dogs were multiplied to such a degree, that it was in some places, " scarcely possible to pass along without being annoyed or attacked by them." A clergyman of high respectability informed Sir Richard Hill from another quarter, that the practice was " ardently cherished by a vast body of people;" and he enlarged upon the numerous ill effects naturally produced in their minds, and its destruction of moral feelings and domestic comfort. From the south of England a gentleman wrote to him: " This ancient borough town of —, of which I am a native, consists of only one, long, narrow street, in the centre of which is a spot which has from time immemorial, been called the *Town Ring*, and where within my remembrance, a large iron ring always remained fixed to this spot, for the purpose of fastening by a strong rope, a bull, whenever the fancy of the populace called for this diversion. During its continuance, all safe travelling was stopped, to the great annoyance and inconvenience of travellers." After commenting on the barbarity practised on these occasions, and mentioning some horrid accidents by which they had been disfigured, he continued—" As from high authority in the House of Commons, it was said, *the breed of bull-dogs merited encouragement*, I cannot avoid trespassing further on your patience, by stating to you that a neighbour of

mine, an industrious earman, was one day pursuing his occupation, and drawing some goods through the street, when a bull-dog, without the least provocation, attacked his only horse, dragged him to the ground, and terribly mangled him. All the neighbourhood were alarmed, and several persons armed with different weapons, myself among the rest, ran to the assistance of the horse, and the dog could not be disengaged from the horse, till some person with a large and sharp knife absolutely cut his throat. These dogs are the greatest nuisances I know, and the terror of the country." That such scenes should have occurred amongst the populace of large towns is no matter of surprise, when we remember the extent to which men of fortune, at one time, encouraged the kindred pursuit of cock-fighting. "I beg permission," the author of the last letter added in a postscript, "to say that in this town, a cock-fighting monthly club, composed of the principal gentlemen of rank and property in the neighbourhood, existed during a period of nearly a century, and for our credit, became extinct about six years ago, for want of a sufficient number of candidates to supply vacancies. This bloody sport may now be reckoned upon by its *civilized* amateurs, as an annual one only, being continued as an attendant on horse-racing. Why, in this age of boasted refinement, cannot men who profess to be Christians, find sufficient recreative amusements without tormenting the brute creation?"

Such were the tastes prevailing less than fifty years ago, over a large portion of the provincial population of this country. The good men who came forward to suppress such exhibitions, demand the gratitude of their nation; while they who, under the erroneous idea of non-interference with the humours of the lower orders,

and under the equally-mistaken one of supposing that such pastimes generated true bravery, opposed their exertions, must have much of our censure but more still of our pity. The mild graces of Christianity in its purity and beauty, generate the only true heroism, and the only magnanimity worthy of the mind of rational man. Hence it is our first duty to teach it to the people ; for without it, reason in ignorance and reason in refinement, will equally lead astray fallen human beings. This is the only corrective of our sinful nature, the evils of which break forth, though under different forms, in light that is only secular, as well as in darkness. We have a sufficient example of what we may expect from an increase of knowledge independent of godliness, in the example of our first parents, who saw that the tree of knowledge was “ pleasant to the eyes and *a tree to be desired to make one wise,*” and ate of it to their ruin. Civilization and the schoolmaster have driven away the taste for bull-baitings, cock-fightings, boxing-matches and their kindred diversions ; a thirst insatiable and invincible for knowledge has arisen in its stead, and acts with a vehement force on the mass of the people. Thereby an impetus has been given to the social system, which will prove destructive or beneficial, according to the principles by which it is regulated. If religion be called in to unite and to guide the different classes of mankind, we shall be secure and happy ; but nothing else will prevent the framework of society from being destroyed by the violence with which it has been set in motion. The sure antidote to this danger we possess in the word of God, and the best hopes of our country are in the efforts made for its circulation.

Such were the principles which the best energies of Sir Richard Hill were ever exerted to diffuse. We have

a pleasing instance of his zeal for them, in a letter written to a clergyman at a moment of national alarm. The autumn of the year 1800 was marked by an apprehension of a scarcity, and the gentleman in question sent Sir Richard Hill a pamphlet he had published on the subject. He acknowledged the present in these terms.

1, *Devonshire Place*, Nov. 10, 1800.

REV. SIR,

When your favour arrived at Hawkstone, I was on the eve of my journey to town, consequently I was too much hurried to make any reply to it. Permit me now to return you my sincere thanks for the smart, sensible, well-written pamphlet entitled, *Thoughts on Scarcity*, which thoughts, so well conceived and so well expressed, I shall be happy to recommend and to circulate among my parliamentary friends. Yet I must own there are some few of your ideas and observations that I cannot entirely acquiesce in, although I have not now time to enter into particular discussions.

Let me add, that you have happily exemplified your taste for natural and romantic scenes, by the feeling, energetic language in which you speak of them in your note, p. 44, which cannot be read without a conviction that the writer's mind was no stranger to the pleasures of the sublime and beautiful. Can I give you a better wish, Sir, than that your relish for the divine and spiritual may yet much exceed the delight with which you view the most charming earthly objects? Oh! Sir, these must all be at an end. Your time is short, your work is great, and when you professed your belief that you were inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you the sacred office of a minister of the gospel, how big

with importance was such a declaration? I again say, can I then, Sir, offer a better wish or prayer for you, than that the beauties of the new creation may as much exalt your heart in the contemplation of them, above all the objects of this lower world, as heaven is above earth, or eternity of higher consequence than time. Happy indeed shall you and I be, if whilst we both profess ourselves admirers of the works of Providence in the stupendous monuments of his power that surround us on every side, we can with Moses of old, mount to the top of Pisgah, and there by the eye of appropriating faith, view the promised land, and view it as our own covenanted inheritance.

Extend this sentiment to the present scarcity, whether real or as I believe it to be, artificial; and it will bring with it a conviction how preferable is that bread which endureth to everlasting life, to that which perisheth; and how much more to be dreaded is a famine of the word of truth, than a dearth of earthly food. Yet how few are there to be found who are under alarms about the former, if they can but get plenty of the latter! Surely the apathy of the bulk of professing Christians in this nation is very lamentable, and proves that they are possessed with a worse than Laodicean spirit. May God open our eyes, and avert the judgments we deserve.

Believe me to be,

Rev. Sir, with great truth,

Yours most faithfully, &c.

RICHARD HILL.

He wrote thus to his friend Mr. Wilberforce on the same subject:—

To W. Wilberforce, Esq., M.P.

Devonshire-place, Dec. 9, 1800.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am sure I can do no good here in a public way, but hope to be a little useful in Shropshire, whither (D. V.) I am going to-morrow morning. Whilst Parliament is deliberating, provisions of all sorts are rising, and we are combating imaginary famine in the midst of real plenty, whilst the prospect of abundance another year can afford no hope of relief. Formerly, the remedy for scarcity was plenty, but now plenty increases the distress. Corn imported from all quarters of the globe, unless it can be imported into the stomachs of the hungry, is of no avail, and government can almost as ill afford to pay the bounty as the poor can the purchase. I am sorry to see that the novel maxims of our Scotchman should be the rule of practice to all England—that the greatest men in the nation are kissing the toe of Pope Adam Smith. I heartily wish that the *Wealth of Nations* may not contribute to make ours poor, by introducing opinions which strongly militate against the well-being of the middle class of individuals, as well as against the more indigent sort. If it was through Mr. Pitt, as you once hinted, that a maximum was established in France during a *real* scarcity, there is no doubt that it greatly augmented the distress of that country at such a time; but if he would or could set a maximum here in this time of plenty, it would be a cure even for monopoly or covetousness. All my tenants, and all the tenants of gentlemen in my neighbourhood, are perfectly willing to bring their corn to market, and to sell it at nine or ten shillings per bushel; but they say this cannot be done unless the thing be general. If

farmers can live well by thus coming forward voluntarily, certainly they might live as well by being dragged compulsorily. The markets at Smithfield, I hear from good authority, are glutted with cattle, yet the owners get more by refusing to sell cheap, and driving the cattle away unsold, than if they dropped the price. Butchers must buy one day at any price, if they do not another; and the rich will eat if the poor and middle classes cannot.

I only add, may God preserve us from a real famine of the word and bread of life, which indeed is now seldom to be found without adulteration; but few lament this famine, or even know what it means.

My most sincere regards attend Mrs. Wilberforce. I trust through mercy, she and the children are well. Believe me, my very dear friend Wilberforce,

Yours faithfully and affectionately,

RICHARD HILL.

P.S. Thousands and millions of herrings might have been cured this year, if it had not been for the late shocking duty on salt, since which labouring people cannot cure even their one annual pig for winter use with potatoes. Whatever this tax brings to the revenue, is more than doubly lost in the operation.

On the fifteenth of May, 1801, he wrote to Mr. Adington, who the night before had proposed to reduce the tax on salt—"I cannot help intruding for one moment to testify the satisfaction I feel at what passed yesterday relative to the salt. The measure of reducing that tax will rejoice the hearts of thousands and millions among the poor, with whose prayers you will be blest; nor is there any step which you could have taken which

will render you so popular among all ranks, and by that means give force and energy to your administration. The people will see and feel that you are their friend, and that you take a cordial part in their distresses, while you are attentively occupied in relieving them." After enlarging upon the peculiar hardship of this duty, from its depriving the peasantry of many little comforts, he continued, "I will now venture to confess that for some time past, I have had it strongly on my mind to take the liberty of speaking to you on this very subject, wishing from my heart to see you as popular as your merits and abilities assure me you ought to be."

He had the highest esteem for the many estimable qualities of this upright statesman, and no difference of views ever disturbed the cordiality of their mutual regard. The language of these letters indicates how truly Sir Richard Hill had at heart the comfort and real welfare of the poor; and it was the way in which he entered into all their little wants and assisted their domestic economy, that shewed them he was their true friend, and prepared them to receive his admonitions respecting their higher interests and the care of their souls. The terms in which he is spoken of by the aged cottagers who remember him at Hawkstone, prove that he had, amongst the many precepts of Scripture he delighted to obey, not forgotten the command, "consider the poor."

CHAPTER XX.

INCREASE OF EVANGELICAL RELIGION. OPPOSITION TO IT. CHARGE OF BISHOP TOMLINE IN 1803. STRICTURES ON IT BY SIR RICHARD HILL. HIS VIEW OF "EVANGELICAL" PREACHING, AND ITS "LEGAL" OPPONENTS. MISREPRESENTATION. TESTIMONY OF SIR RICHARD HILL TO THE EVANGELICAL CLERGY. THE ARTICLES. THE RIGHT MODE OF DEFENDING THE TRUTHS THEY CONTAIN. GOOD WORKS. SENSIBLE IMPULSES. CAUSES OF DEPARTURE FROM THE CHURCH. METHODS OF FILLING A CHURCH. INDUSTRY HALL. REV. BRIAN HILL AND REGINALD HEBER. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

EVANGELICAL DOCTRINES.

THE religious energy which marked the commencement of the present century, was far from being viewed with complacency by a large body of men in the Church, who totally misconceived its nature and tendency. Providentially, however, for our country and its establishment, there were not wanting persons of talent, station, and influence, who appreciated and were willing to defend evangelical doctrines against their mistaken opponents. To them we owe a perpetual debt of gratitude; for by their instrumentality the leaven was infused into the mass of the people, which has spread more or less into every corner of the land, and has, under God, become the life and preservation of religion amongst us. The

names of Wilberforce, Hill, Hannah More, and others, who, though they wrote less, laboured in the same cause with kindred zeal, will be cherished with increasing respect as each successive year adds new lustre to the light they helped to enkindle. Their gifts and opportunities were of different kinds, but their design was one—the safety and usefulness of the Church by a revival of its forgotten doctrines and dormant energies. The part taken by Sir Richard Hill was characterized by high moral courage. He was ready to contend with the opponent of evangelical truth under any apparent disadvantage, and was totally fearless of opprobrium when religion was the subject of his exertions. I am now about to give a remarkable instance of this in his defence of the evangelical clergy, against the strictures on their doctrines contained in the charge of Dr. Tomline, Bishop of Lincoln, in the year 1803. No one can deny the learning and ability of that well-known Prelate; but he was an example of the extreme misconception and prejudice to which the most lettered minds are subject, when relying on the wisdom of this world, so often proved to be “foolishness with God.” His Lordship commenced his charge thus:—“My Reverend Brethren, at our last meeting, I endeavoured to warn you of the danger which threatened the general cause of Christianity, by the alarming growth of infidelity and atheism. At present I wish to call your attention to a subject which relates more particularly to the safety of our own Established Church. Upon that occasion, indeed, I briefly mentioned the mischievous effects of what is miscalled *evangelical preaching*; but the late progress of the opinions which it professes to inculcate, and the recent attempts of its advocates, seem to demand more full and immediate notice.” The Bishop then proceeded to as-

sert that the essence of evangelical doctrine was Calvinism. A great mistake this was in the outset ; for there is nothing more certain than that evangelical preaching is by no means grounded either upon the tenets of Calvin, or those who differ from his views, but upon certain truths and experiences without which there can be no right knowledge of the plan of salvation, nor any vital Christianity. His Lordship in the midst of much loose argument, and still looser divinity, used this true expression—"Our Church is not Lutheran—it is not Calvinistic—it is not Arminian—it is *scriptural*." So are the doctrines of the evangelical clergy as a body.

Sir Richard Hill thought the tone of our Thirty-nine Articles *Calvinistical* ; several of his pious friends thought them much more *Arminian* ; but they were perfectly united in their opinions as to the work of grace in the soul and its effects upon the life. Neither of these views prevented those who adopted one or the other, from being equally good churchmen, and equally pious Christians. The Church of England with true moderation opens her arms to both classes of believers ; and which of them would come forward and say it wished the other excluded ? We have had many bright luminaries of our establishment of both persuasions, who have united in one communion ; but these Calvinists professed doctrines the venerable Calvin himself would have owned, and not such as have been disfigured by the narrow spirit and wild extravagancies of visionaries ; and the Arminians now alluded to, allowed no taint of Arianism or Pelagianism to mingle with their tenets. Hence either class of these divines might fairly be denominated *evangelical*, if they agreed in those truths on which the vitality of religion depends. But Bishop Tomline, and with him many others of a like prejudiced

spirit, cast upon the evangelical clergy the unjust stigma of a *Calvinism* so called, than which, in the inferences drawn from it, nothing could possibly be more incorrect. All sorts of names began to be applied to them. "The following," said Sir Richard Hill,¹ "are all now in good fashionable use and tolerable currency—Methodists—Enthusiasts—Schismatics—Evangelical preachers—Disturbers of quiet congregations—Calvinists—Puritans—Canterers—Hypocrites—Fanatics, and even Antinomians. The word Methodist, however, begins to get rather out of vogue." The reason of this was that it was more particularly applied to the Wesleyans, to many of whom, though he differed most widely from some of their notions, Sir Richard Hill willingly accorded the following commendation. "Amongst those people, I am not ashamed to avow that many of the excellent of the earth are to be found, whose vital piety, and heart-experience far outstrip their head-knowledge and doctrinal attainments."

Sir Richard Hill commenced his first letter to Bishop Tomline in these words: "My Lord, it would afford me the most sensible concern, if even my veneration for, and attachment to, the Church of England, were to cause me for a moment to forget the exalted station your Lordship holds in that Church, or the learning and abilities you are confessedly possessed of. To steer clear of offence, is my sincere wish, and shall be my endeavour in giving your Lordship the trouble of reading the following pages." After making some remarks on the opening sentences of the bishop's charge, relative to evangelical preaching, he proceeded: "The term *evangelical preaching*, when properly used, means *gospel*

¹ In a note to his letters to Bishop Tomline.

preaching, or the preaching *glad tidings*; and thus it stands contrasted with, and in opposition to, *legal preaching*, or holding forth obedience to the law of works, more or less, in whole or in part, as the ground of a sinner's acceptance with God." In contradistinction to such teachers whose tenets were entirely misrepresented, the bishop called the others *the regular clergy*—certainly, as Sir Richard Hill observed, "a very vague term." From the former the Bishop declared he believed the Church to be in danger; but Sir Richard replied, "They who have the misfortune to differ from your Lordship, are fully persuaded that the perilous state of the Church is to be attributed to preachers of a direct contrary stamp." From "men," he observed, "of an externally moral, pharisaical cast, decent formalists and self-justiciaries, who are, for the most part, greater enemies to sound doctrine and to pure experimental piety, than the openly profane and careless; for these often admire what they will not imitate, and are ready to shew regard and candour where the others manifest nothing but rancour and bitterness, and rejoice in picking up every term they can lay hold on, to the prejudice of religion itself." He then continued: "After the cautions which have gone forth concerning *evangelical* preaching, from an authority so high as that of your Lordship, can we wonder if on all sides, the pulpits were to ring against it? To be of one mind with their learned diocesan, may be as convenient as agreeable to many of the clergy, especially as the business may be so easily accomplished; and that no very abundant share of watchfulness and labour in the duties of office—especially when they are made easy by innocent recreations, among which each will reckon his own—is necessary to obtain or keep up the character of a *moderate divine*, or

if you please, a *regular clergyman*, is pretty evident. From gentlemen of this stamp, therefore, we are not to wonder if we henceforth hear *evangelical preaching* so much cried down, that in a short space of time there should be nothing evangelical left to preach against; and so much said in favour of universal redemption, which takes up so great a part of your Lordship's charge, that redemption itself should be in danger of being *universally* preached out of doors. And this in the same way, and by the same rule that moral preaching has long ago given the death's blow to moral practice, and the continual harangues we have been dinning with about virtue, have left us quite at a nonplus to know where virtue is to be found. And this must be the case, till the clergy return to our good old reformation principles, by laying the foundation of all true virtue on Christ alone, and making faith in him the root from which every divine temper and all holy practice can possibly grow." The opponents of the evangelical clergy totally, though far be it from any one to say wilfully, mistook the doctrines they combated. At almost every period, the Church of Christ has been injured by the spirit of misrepresentation, leading men to the greatest errors in judging their brethren. The only remedy is to be found in the cultivation of a full and comprehensive charity, which droops in the atmosphere of *party*. Great mischief has arisen from churchmen allowing themselves to be called either Calvinists or Arminians, according as their notions of the divine predestination tend towards the tenets of either one or the other of these celebrated theologians. Out of this arose the breach between Lady Huntingdon and the Hills, and Fletcher of Madeley, when the *piety* of every one of these persons was alike unquestionable. A greater de-

gree of moderation prevails in these days, and will yet, it is to be hoped, increase. But the spirit of misconstruction is far from being extinct ; and the fear of it causes many to refrain from the expression of sentiments, that might otherwise be useful in promoting general harmony, and strengthening the ties which ought to unite in one lovely band, those, who though they see not eye to eye, have only the great common cause in their hearts. On this account, I have carefully avoided quoting those passages in the various pamphlets of Sir Richard Hill, which are confined exclusively to his own private views of the tenets called Calvinistic. This is no time for reviving such controversies, or denying inferences which few men would now draw from his sentiments. Suffice it to say, that while he would not refrain from giving a large prominence to these notions in his writings, he had a heart to love the truth in all those different hues, with which the varying complexions of the minds of the pious are wont to invest it, without detriment to its real excellence. Influenced by this principle, he gave the following testimony to the evangelical clergy in general, from none of whom he withheld that appellation, because their vision “ through the glass darkly,” did not precisely tally with his own. “ That,” said he to the Bishop in his letters on his charge, “ I have the happiness of being particularly acquainted with several of the clergy, whether rightly called or miscalled *evangelical*, I glory in avowing ; and the more so, as I know them to be men of real grace and true humility, attached by every principle to our excellent constitution, both in Church and State ; men who have strained, and are still willing to strain, every nerve for the defence and preservation of both, and who only want to be known, in order to be loved and respected. Yet these are the persons who

are now held up to public odium, branded with names of reproach equally unjust and ignominious, insomuch that whosoever ventures too near them, is supposed to be in danger of catching the infection of Puritanism, Methodism, Schism, Enthusiasm, Fanaticism, Jacobinism, and almost every other *ism* that can be thought of. Without laying claim to the spirit of prophecy, it is easy to foresee, that if this phantom of prejudice be suffered to stalk throughout the land, in the daring manner it has done for some years past, that the Church will indeed be purged and melted down too with a witness ; but it will be in such a crucible, as will let out all the gold and retain only the dross. The dissenting interest will of course continue to gain ground in every part of the nation, as it now does in a very great degree ; sinners will flock to hear the sound of evangelical truth wherever they can, whilst the Church herself will sit as a desolate widow, bemoaning her faithful sons all forced into banishment."

The view taken in this last sentence of the dangers in which our Church was involved at the time it was penned, is but too correct ; though thanks be to God they have through his goodness been avoided by the exertions of those, who have revived the doctrines and the zeal of the good old reformers. Heedless of the clamour raised against their proceedings, they calmly pursued their arduous course, and have, it is hoped, placed our sanctuary in a condition to resist the strongest attack that the power of man or the malice of Satan can make upon it. The winter of frigid *orthodoxy* has past away, and the ice and snow of cold morality no longer covers the field on which the good seed has grown, with the blessed promise of bringing forth a hundred fold. But with the true corn there have come up tares ;

and here is our danger. At the disputes which have arisen amongst us, true Christians mourn, and enemies scoff. The same spirit which caused a Tomline and a Daubeny to oppose reformation principles yet remains, though the shape it assumes is framed to meet the change of the times. But happily for us, to use the language of Sir Richard Hill, "The thirty-nine Articles stand firm as the walls and bulwarks of our Sion; and it is not in the power of all the arts of twisting, torturing, wire-drawing, false glossing, and subterfuging, which sophistry and duplicity can muster up, to evade the force of them as they stand in their own original simple dress, in the Book of Common Prayer." He called these articles Calvinistical; but although he was conscientiously of opinion that they were so, it would have been better to have simply stated his notion of the truths contained in them, than to have applied to them an epithet not recognised in any part of our authorized standards. The compilers of these inestimable treasures were not followers of any system of man, but of the word of God. An *evangelical clergyman* is one, therefore, who calls the attention of his hearers as churchmen, to "the literal and grammatical sense" of the doctrines he has subscribed, without reference to the creeds either of Leyden or Geneva. An opposite course only weakens the good cause; and if Sir Richard Hill had followed this rule, he would have been a more effectual champion of the Gospel, valuable as his services were to the great cause. Our Church is simply *apostolic*; that is, our Reformers restored the plain doctrines of the Apostles, and first teachers of Christianity, by divesting them of all the false glosses, and flagrant errors by which their beauty had been hidden from the world. This sentiment was well expressed by one, who though a

favourer of the doctrines of Calvin, thus describes the chief characteristic of the Church of England.¹ “ The whole world is to know that the Church of England is not changed or variable like the moon ; nor affecteth novelty or new lessons, but holdeth stedfastly and conscionably that truth which by the martyrs and other ministers in this last age of the world, hath been restored unto this kingdom, and is grounded on God’s written word, the only foundation of our faith. And being the same, all men may see that we are still at unity, both among ourselves at home, and with the neighbour churches abroad, in all matters of chiefest importance and fundamental points of religion, though our adversaries, the Papists, would fain beat the contrary into the common people’s heads.”

In addition to the unfair inferences drawn by the Bishop of Lincoln, from what he considered to be characteristics of evangelical preaching, his charge contained equally wrong deductions from the doctrine of justification by faith,² and misrepresentations of what he called *sensible impulses*. He asserted that in our Book of Common Prayer, “ good works are never represented as unnecessary to salvation ; and sensible impulses of the Spirit are no where acknowledged in our liturgy.” With regard to the former of these assertions, Sir Richard Hill inquired—“ And pray, my Lord, who ever said

¹ Rogers, Chaplain to Archbishops Whitgift and Bancroft.

² I have in a former part of this volume, endeavoured to shew that the opinions of this class of theologians and the modern semi-Romanists, both end in the same disparagement of the doctrine of justification by faith. For an admirable elucidation of the principles of our establishment, and of the dangers of the views of the Tracts for the Times, I refer the reader to “ Essays on the Church,” by a Layman,” 4th Edition.

that they were so?" He assured the Bishop that he was positive that no *evangelical preacher* whatever would affirm any such thing. "That," continued he, "they have no part in procuring the pardon of sin and acceptance with God, which is by *faith only*, as apprehending the righteousness of Christ, every faithful minister will constantly maintain; but that good works are the necessary fruits and evidences of lively faith, and that they follow after justification, every sound divine will not only admit but will earnestly contend for them in that view. This sort of general charge, however, seldom wants the effect which misrepresentation is calculated to produce; but it is grievous to see how frequently these stale cavils are brought up, though as often contradicted and replied to."

The remark on *sensible impulses* he called "a gentle blast of odium by a side wind." "Yet the expression," he said, "may certainly be used both in a good and in a bad sense. So far as it means that the Holy Spirit operates on the heart by powerful incitements and persuasive motions, *drawing up the mind to high and heavenly things*, and conveying a *feeling* sense of divine consolation to the soul; so far, I say, the expression *sensible* impulse is perfectly warrantable. And I should humbly suppose your Lordship admitted at least thus much, when you declared yourself *inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost* to take upon you the sacred office of a minister of Christ; as also when you subscribed to the seventeenth article, which affirms that they who are predestinated to salvation, do *feel in themselves* the working of the Spirit of Christ, and not less when you join in prayer with the Church every Whit-Sunday, that you may evermore *rejoice in the Spirit's holy comfort*." "There is also," he observed, "a bad sense in which the words

sensible impulses may be used, or rather abused, which is, when made the pretence for enthusiastic raptures or imaginations that have no warrant in Scripture, but proceed from a heated brain, leading the unhappy persons who give way to such impulses, into all sorts of extravagancies, and swelling them up to the highest pitch of delusion and spiritual pride." The good sense of these remarks will be obvious to every pious reader, and will vindicate the memory of their author from the unmerited aspersion of enthusiasm. They were followed by some strictures not less pointed, on the Bishop's lamentations at seeing the increase of sectarians. "Your Lordship laments the growth of sectaries, and that many leave the communion of the Established Church. Yet who is to blame for this, but those who by their false doctrine and carnal lives, drive the flock away from their parochial churches, to seek among the dissenters what they cannot find at home? Whilst this is the case, no harangues, either to clergy or people, will be of any avail to prevent the defection. Nay, all cautions and prohibitions will only increase what they are meant to put a stop to. It is not so much the character of the people of this nation, as is often supposed, that they will not attend public worship; for they certainly will and do attend in great numbers, and with the utmost solemnity, where they are sensible they can profit by what they hear; where they know the minister is in earnest to save their souls, and speaks warmly from his own heart to theirs. Whilst thus it is, we do not see the Church communions at all deserted; so far from it, that they increase exceedingly, and many dissenters relinquish their meetings to attend the ordinances of the establishment." That these were the true causes of a great deal of dissent no candid churchman may deny; and it was this which helped to

give to such nonconformity, though it cannot be defended upon *principle*, the evangelical character which is so widely different from that exhibited by men who are made dissenters, not by zeal for *spirituality*, but by a most *carnal* policy, which has awfully shrouded, where it has not quite extinguished, the former.

There can be no doubt that numerous departures from the Church were caused at the beginning of this century, by the flagrant discrepancy between the sermons of many of the clergy and the liturgy of the Church. Persons who entered into the spirit of our devotional formulæ, found that spirit damped by the cold morality of the pulpit. But if such men were truly attached to the Church, as the majority of them were, they ought to have well weighed the step they took in seeking the doctrines of the reformation elsewhere, before they made the hazardous experiment, especially as they had them in the prayers and in the portions of Scripture appointed to be read. These remarks are intended to apply to the educated and enlightened ; for such a sacrifice was hardly to be expected from others, who had never been duly instructed in the value of those services which such multitudes are now taught to appreciate. The former constantly professed their intention of confining themselves entirely to the established mode of worship, the instant they could find in their parish churches the profitable teaching they desired ; but they too often forgot that this intention would not be discovered by numbers, whom the example of their forsaken seats in the sanctuary might lead to neglect worship altogether. Christian self-denial extends farther than many seem to imagine, and there is such a thing as *religious* as well as *worldly* selfishness. The personal feeling, *I cannot profit under such and such a ministry*, has led more than one

good man to the dereliction of a *principle*, so that his individual comfort has been purchased at too dear a price.

Sir Richard Hill conceived that the increase of dissenting congregations might have been greatly prevented by opening a wider door of admission into orders, of men who became ministers of conventicles, because they could not obtain entrance into the Church, on account of their not having had the advantage of a University education. How far such a course of proceeding might have been advisable in his times, when candidates for ordination were less numerous than now, it may not be easy to determine ; but if the line were not in these days drawn pretty distinctly, it is easy to see the inconvenience which would follow. Besides, there is an abundant field for labour in the present times for all zealous persons. District-visiting, Sunday-school teaching, and their kindred occupations, may employ zealous and devoted young men, whose advantages of education have not been such as to warrant their being placed in the situation of ministers, at a moment in which learning, and that of the soundest description, is truly needed to defend our institutions, and to escape the perilous speciousness with which error is invested, in this the most trying period the Church has ever witnessed since the Reformation. We have, however, much to hope from the rapid increase of those temples which are every where rising to adorn and bless our beauteous and enlightened island, from the increased piety and Scriptural knowledge of the clergy, and from the affection for the establishment which their zeal has elicited. The Church has only to determine to *outdo* dissent in every thing ; in accommodation, in union, in kindness, in education, in doctrine, and at the same time to resist the introduc-

tion of every principle opposed to reformation-truth and reformation-charity, and she is safe.

Such a line of conduct would quickly fill our churches with admiring and enlightened hearers, although the crowd which may attend must not always be taken as a criterion of solid good. The following remarks of Sir Richard Hill, in one of his letters to Bishop Tomline, are worthy of attention :—" It may be asked, will nothing but *evangelical preaching* bring together a large congregation ? I reply, yes, almost any kind of preaching, if there be certain concomitants attending it. Such as a warm, handsome Church ; the expected occasional presence of some person or persons of exalted rank and fashion ; a band of well-practised hired voices, perhaps from the theatres or opera-house ; a preacher who has a mellifluent diction ; elegant language, with a graceful, popular, pathetic delivery, more especially when addressing himself to the passions of his auditory in a charity sermon, and exhorting them to be liberal for the gain of eternal life. Everything of this sort will undoubtedly tend to fill a church, though the hearers may all be sent empty away, extolling the excellence of the discourse, and admiring the talents of the preacher, but not knowing, indeed not caring, whether they have been listening to Arianism and Socinianism, or to pure truth, nor whether they have heard anything or nothing of the Saviour of sinners in all or in any of his offices and undertakings." He concluded his remonstrances in these words—" I have now, as an affectionate son of my dear mother, the Church of England, faithfully delivered my own soul, and I confidently look and pray to God in the name of Jesus Christ for his blessing on the feeble endeavours of an ' Old Member of Parliament.' "

While Sir Richard Hill was thus actively employed

in what he considered his public duties, he was in his own domain a model of private benevolence. That the children of the poor on his estate might have the advantages of religious knowledge and industrial training, he erected a building about two miles from his mansion at Hawkstone, which he called "Industry Hall."¹ Instruction was there given in reading and work of various kinds, "so as to enable" the pupils "to procure a livelihood, and fit them to be good and useful servants." The discipline and rewards of the institution were extremely well regulated, and each child on quitting it, received the gift of a Bible and Prayer Book, if not forfeited by misconduct. The school opened with prayer,² and all possible attention was paid to sound religious teaching, as the only safe basis of instruction. The principal work done in the institution was the manufactory of wool, to which certain hours were devoted.

¹ A most efficient school is now carried on in this place, by the generous and enlightened support of Sir Rowland and Lady Hill.

² The prayer was, I believe, the composition of Sir Richard, or of his brother, the Rev. Brian Hill. It is very simple and pious: — "O almighty and most merciful Father, hear us, we beseech thee, for the sake of Jesus Christ, and grant us all those blessings of which we stand in need from thy gracious hands. Thou art our Maker, and our Preserver. Thou hast given us holy commandments, and we ought to obey thee with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and those who do not obey thee, thou hast threatened with terrible punishments. O good God, forgive us all our faults through the merits of thy dear Son, and keep us from all wicked ways. Make us remember that thou dost see all our actions, and know all our thoughts, that we may evermore serve thee in sincerity and truth. Bless the works of our hands, and bless our learning. Keep us from the power of the devil, and suffer not any evil accidents to befall us. Grant us thankful hearts for all thy mercies, and when it shall be thy good pleasure to remove us from the land of the living, receive us into thy blessed kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, who hath taught us to pray, *Our Father, &c.*"

Fleeces were sent to the "Hall," and were picked by one set, carded by another, spun by a third, and at last knitted into stockings, or made into hearth-rugs, carriage-mats, and other useful articles. These were eagerly purchased at a low price, and afforded a premium on the labour of the children, and helped to pay the expences of their education and clothing. When we remember the extreme destitution of the greater part of England at that period, it is impossible to read the following account of some of these proceedings at Hawkstone without interest. "Monday," says Mr. Brian Hill in his description of Industry Hall, "is the day of examination, when the children are catechised and the rewards distributed. The names of the scholars are put down upon a slate, and marked for every day's absence and every fault; these again are noted in *the black book*, which is brought out on the annual festival, known among the children by the name of *the big day*, when the prizes for good behaviour are distributed, according to the number of marks. Sunday evening, after the Church service is over, is appropriated during the months of May, June, July, and August, to reading the Holy Scriptures, and giving such a plain, practical exposition of them, as may be suitable to the capacities of the young and unlearned. The portion of God's words usually selected upon this occasion, is the second lesson for the evening service, after which a sermon is read; and from the regularity of attendance, as well as from the order and decency which are always preserved, it is presumed that the neighbours are persuaded they cannot spend an hour on a Sabbath evening in a more profitable manner. The *festival* is held on the first of July, when the children and their mothers are entertained with tea and rolls, immediately after which a distribution of the prize-

money takes place, and as the rewards are adjudged by strangers,¹ no partiality can prevail."

Mr. Brian Hill was very active in his attention to this school. He was a man of elegant mind and of engaging manners; and to these attractive qualities were added the graces of true piety and warm benevolence. His residence was at the village of Weston, adjoining the park of his brother, where his memory is still cherished with the fondness it well deserves. Reginald Heber, first rector of Hodnet, and then the laborious Bishop of Calcutta, was his neighbour and intimate friend. Whenever he had written anything new, either of poetry or prose, he generally carried it to Weston, where he was welcome at all hours, and read it to Mr. Brian Hill, of whose literary judgment he had a high opinion. This accomplished scholar passed some of his happiest hours in that way, giving full vent to those charms of conversation by which he was so eminently distinguished. The few favoured individuals, who saw him in the freedom of spirit to which he abandoned himself in these social moments, describe the charm of his manner as beyond all conception. The gentleness of Mr. Brian Hill's disposition set him at perfect ease; he told his anecdotes, recited his poetry, unfolded his opinions of the events of the times, and criticised the authors of the day with an animation and frankness peculiarly his own. It was not, however, till roused by the noble project of doing the work of an evangelist in India, that the latent energies of his soul appeared in their full power. His spirit seemed to expand under the deep impression of duty, while it pleased God to enlighten

¹ Most probably the visitors of Sir Richard Hill, to whom he endeavoured, by means of this pleasing spectacle, to set an example for their imitation.

him with clearer views of doctrinal religion than he had possessed before. The prospect of becoming a Missionary Bishop at once humbled and ennobled his mind, as was evident to all who heard him utter with an unequalled pathos and dignity, the expression, "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Resting on this only safe basis, he went forth, laboured, and died. How he felt, is expressed in his unrivalled missionary hymn, which was probably, as were his beautiful lines on Jerusalem, first recited in the house of Mr. Brian Hill.

But to return to the principal subject of this volume. In the erection and management of Industry Hall, Sir Richard Hill had anticipated the spirit at least of some of the best plans for the instruction of the lower classes, propounded in this age of education. He knew the worth of industrious habits and morality; but he knew also that the best of all human schemes for effecting these objects must, unless based upon religion, prove abortive. Education is now no longer dependent on the exertions of a few wealthy men; it is demanded, and must be given. The spirit of the age will brook no refusal. If the word of God is its groundwork, all will be well; if not, virtue will soon fade like a blossom on a rootless stem, science will err, having no helm, and the whole social system, directed solely by the changeable policy of man, will lose every element of happiness and prosperity.

CHAPTER XXI.

BIBLE SOCIETY. LORD TEIGNMOUTH PRESIDENT. DEFENCE CONTEMPORATED BY SIR RICHARD HILL. HIS ILLNESS. HE DETERMINES TO RETIRE FROM PARLIAMENT. HIS REASONS. CIRCULAR. THE REGRET OF HIS COUNTY. HIS DEATH. HIS MONUMENT IN HODNET CHURCH. SIR JOHN HILL. LORD HILL AND HIS BROTHERS. CHARACTER AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF SIR RICHARD HILL. REMARKS.

BIBLE SOCIETY.

THE most remarkable event that occurred just before the retirement of Sir Richard Hill from public life, was the formation of the Bible Society. He could not help taking a most lively interest in a project so glorious, as that of diffusing the knowledge of the word of God over the world, by the united effort of all denominations; but the circumstance of Lord Teignmouth having become the President of the Institution, made it also an affair of personal friendship. The individual who advised his Lordship's being called to that honourable post, was the respected and upright Bishop Porteus, who recommended it to Mr. Owen, the clerical secretary, in a conversation at Fulham. Availing himself of this counsel, Mr. Owen moved in the Committee that Lord Teignmouth should be invited to become President of the Society, a propo-

sition which was seconded by Mr. Rowland Hill in terms of cordial respect for his noble friend, as well as for the Bishop of London, with whose recommendation he considered it was not less a duty than a pleasure to comply. Lord Teignmouth readily acquiesced in this nomination, and entered upon his new duties with the energy and prudence that continued to distinguish him to the last.¹ The whole circle of Christian society could not have presented the committee with a happier choice, as respected all the qualifications for an office at once so delicate and yet so important. Without yielding an iota of principle, he was beloved and respected by every man who saw him in the chair of the Bible Society, as a pattern of firmness, mildness, dignity, and charity. Whenever illness compelled his absence from an anniversary, it was sincerely lamented by every member present, and the manner in which his name was mentioned by the most distinguished of the speakers, or by the humblest inquirer, "where is Lord Teignmouth?" manifested a uniform feeling that his presence gave grace and vigour to the cause, and that he was truly beloved. Nor did any man ever preside over the movements of a religious institution, with a more single eye to the great end in view; and in the same spirit he sent forth his Address, as a friend, to the Clergy of the Church of England, inviting their co-operation in an object respecting which he considered that there ought scarcely to be two opinions among them. Many, however, could not accord with him, having their scruples as to the constitution of the Society—scruples entitled to respect when stated without harshness or reproaches towards those who differ from

¹ At his death he was succeeded by Lord Bexley, a nobleman of whom it is impossible to speak with more respect than he justly merits for his urbanity and philanthropy.

them. Yet how the simple act of calling in the aid of men of all denominations to circulate *our* version of the Bible, can injure the Church of England, it seems impossible to explain, if that Church is, as we believe it to be, the most scriptural in existence. But there were persons who, not content with argument, indulged in bitter invective on the conduct of Lord Teignmouth and his fellow churchmen in the Bible Society, accompanied by the most monstrous misconstruction of their views and proceedings. I find on the margin of an adverse pamphlet, notes in the hand-writing of Sir Richard Hill, which lead me to conjecture that he was preparing to use his pen in defence of the Bible Society, and his friend, the President. He entered fully into its objects and constitution, and I presume was only prevented by declining strength from becoming one of its public champions, as he had been of numerous other causes which he believed to be for the welfare of mankind. He also deeply felt that all Christians ought, as far as possible, to offer one another "the embraces of peace," a sentiment which always grows in the heart of the true believer as his affections ripen for heaven.

In the autumn of 1806, Sir Richard Hill, finding himself in a state of considerable debility, determined on going to Bath for the benefit of change of air and the waters. While he was on the way thither, a dissolution of Parliament took place, and he resolved to resign his seat, and spend the residue of his days in retirement. To Lord Powys he wrote, "the voice of age and infirmities is too powerful to be resisted, and as I cannot discharge my duty to my constituents in the manner I hope I have ever done in the days of health and vigour, I have no further desire to keep my seat." In the same strain he communicated his intention to his noble friend

the Marquis of Stafford ; and he informed Lord Bradford in one of his letters to his Lordship, that he was “unable to pass through those busy scenes of public life which had engaged him for almost thirty years.”

To the gentlemen, clergy, and freeholders in general of Shropshire, he addressed the subjoined circular, in which he truly described his conduct as the representative of their county, and his reasons for retiring.

Hawkstone, Oct. 23, 1806.

GENTLEMEN,

Being absent from home, and on my road to Bath, when I heard of the dissolution of Parliament, and having but just returned into Shropshire, it was not in my power to address you on a more early occasion, in order to return you my most grateful thanks for the long experience I have had of your kindness and support, as one of your representatives in Parliament.

Sensible as I am of such repeated testimonies of your esteem and goodness, yet, under my present infirmities, and at my advanced period of life, I certainly ought not to be solicitous of prolonging an honour, which, for almost thirty years of health and activity, I have looked upon as one of the most flattering and distinguished which could be bestowed on an individual ; an honour, however, upon which I humbly trust the long test you have had of my Parliamentary conduct, has cast no blot, either through the power of corrupt influence, or by an undue bias to this or that set of men ; never leaning to opposition or ministry, but as I was persuaded in my conscience that opposition or ministry leaned to the public good ; sometimes voting with one side, sometimes with the other, though I have always supported govern-

ment so far as I thought government measures were for the good of the nation ; pursuant to that declaration of the most perfect independence with which I set out when I first took my seat.

Conscious of these facts, and that from my age and declining state of health, I cannot longer do you that justice which has been always my highest aim and ambition to do, I beg leave to retire, fully impressed with the deepest sense of the obligation I am under from your kind partiality, and which can never be effaced on this side the grave.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your ever faithful,

And truly grateful humble servant,

RICHARD HILL.

How much his retirement was felt by his friends and constituents may be gathered from the following letter, addressed to him by one of the most distinguished of the latter.

—, Oct. 12, 1806.

MY DEAR SIR,

An absence from home prevented me from answering your letter till the present moment. Your plea for quitting your very honourable station, which you have filled with so much credit to yourself and the entire satisfaction of your friends, is allowed on all hands to be a fair and of course an honest one. You may depend upon me, that a general [regret] pervades the whole county on your departure into retirement, and not a constituent you had but breathes with myself a

sincere and hearty good wish for your future welfare and felicity. For my own part, my gratitude will never end but with my days, and once more I heartily, willingly, and truly repeat to you, that I am highly sensible of every kind indulgence I have been so often honoured with, and I beg leave to assure you, I shall hold you in my memory in faithful and sincerely grateful remembrance, so long as that memory affords me one, even the very smallest chance for recollection. I remain,

My dear Sir,

Invariably yours,

I have inserted this letter, written by one of the first men in Shropshire, because I believe it contained the true sentiments of a large majority in that county, when they were called upon to part with their old and long-tried member. His was not the popularity which is gained by a few particular acts of political skill, but the solid regard of an enlightened and numerous body of constituents, who admired his integrity and courage, while they had perpetual experience of the kindness and courtesy of his disposition. His views of religion had raised up opponents to his opinions, but among them all, except of the very lowest and meanest, he could not reckon an enemy, nor was he personally the foe of any living creature.

Under these circumstances, it was no wonder that the retirement of Sir Richard Hill was very extensively regretted; and when he was no longer seen in the House of Commons, the place he used to occupy was confessed to have been filled by a consistent and upright Christian. Whatever was thought of his judgment, his quotations of Scripture, or his witty humour, every man seemed to

have a latent kindness of feeling for the frank transparency of his character, and the true benevolence of his heart.

When he left public life and retired quietly to Hawkstone, he endeavoured to diffuse happiness around him. In order to provide innocent recreation for his servants, he encouraged a domestic band of music. Almost every man in his establishment played upon some instrument, and on fine summer days he used to invite his company to go by water to the romantic spot in his grounds, called by him "Neptune's Whim," and his band performed as they were rowed along to the beautiful summer-house, where he had placed the figure of the old fabulous monarch of the deep. It was an animating scene; and he loved to hear the echoes of the music from the lofty rocks of his park, when old age prevented his climbing, as was his wont in days of activity, to enjoy the varied scenes they presented to his view. After dining with his visitors in this curious retreat, he would return in the way he came, delighting in the comfortable reflection that they who heard the notes of his progress thought of him as their friend. After passing two years in this tranquil enjoyment of rural life, he was taken ill upon one of his favourite excursions, and returned home to the chamber of his last sickness. He died on the 28th day of August, 1808, and was buried in the vault at Hodnet church, over which there is this inscription—"Sepulchre of the Hills, ab an^o. 1500." A monument is erected to his memory, and on it is engraved the following tribute to his worth:—

IN MEMORY

OF SIR RICHARD HILL, BARONET,

Of Hawkstone in this County,

Eldest Son of SIR ROWLAND HILL, Baronet,

And in several successive Parliaments one of the Representatives
of the same,Who in the lively hope of a blessed Resurrection,
Through the alone righteousness of Christ his Redeemer,
Resigned his soul into the hands of his heavenly Father,
On the 28th day of November, in the year 1808,
And the 76th of his own age.

He desired that as little as possible might be said of him in the newspapers, or on his tombstone.

The character he most delighted in, was that
of a sinner freely saved by Sovereign grace.
His religious sentiments were those established
in the Church of England at the time of the Reformation,
as expressed in the doctrinal Articles of that Church,
to which he was always steadily attached,
though maintaining a truly catholic spirit
towards all good men of different persuasions.

Sir Richard Hill, who never married, was succeeded in his title and estates by his brother Mr. John Hill, the father of those brave defenders of their country in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, whose names will be honourably enrolled in every record of the military glory of the land which gave them birth. To the eldest of these distinguished soldiers, the second son of Sir John Hill, whose merits afterwards raised him to the peerage and to his present exalted situation at the head of the army, Sir Richard bequeathed the manor and house of Hardwick Grange, a delightful residence about half way between Hawkstone and Shrewsbury. He lived long enough to witness the commencement of Lord Hill's high

reputation, and calls him in his will, "my much esteemed nephew and godson, General Rowland Hill." The first¹ action in which the brigade of General Hill encountered and was victorious over the legions of Napoleon in the Peninsula, took place in the autumn of the year in which Sir Richard Hill died. It was the battle of Roliça, so called from the beautiful village of that name, which overhangs a small plain. Here it was that Laborde found the rush of the British forces from the mountains, as irresistible as the winter torrent when its flood descends through their precipitous ravines, to the low ground on which he had marshalled his divisions. From this day, to the victories of Toulouse and Waterloo, Lord Hill gathered fresh laurels in each encounter; nor was it easy to determine which of his qualities was most to be admired—his bravery or his coolness, his firmness or his humanity. He won the affection of his own soldiers, the respect of hostile armies, the approbation of his Prince, and the applause of his country. Nor has one flower fallen from his chaplet of honour, in the long peace his skill assisted in obtaining for Europe, while others have been added to it by his masterly superintendence for eleven years of the arrangements of the whole army. It was in the month June, 1814, that he returned to the bosom of his family and the peaceful groves of Hawkstone. His homeward route was a continued scene of triumph, and he was greeted with enthusiasm in every town through which he passed to the home of his ancestors and the embraces of his

¹ It was the first of the course of engagements, every one of which brought new fame to Lord Hill. That series is as follows: Roliça, Vimeiro, Corunna, Douro, Talavera, Busaco, Arroyo de Molinos, Almaraz, Vittoria, Pyrennees, Nivelle, Nive, Hilllette, Orthez, Aire, Tarbes, Toulouse, Waterloo.

venerable father, then in the enjoyment of a healthful old age. A public dinner was given him in Shrewsbury, whose inhabitants poured forth by thousands to meet the distinguished cavalcade that escorted him to the town hall, where he received the well-earned testimonials of honour voted him by the grateful admirers of his valour and success.¹ The promenades of the romantic "Quarry," well known to every visitor of the town, were spread with tables, and more than twenty thousand persons either joined in these festivities or were spectators of the animating sight, the interest of which was not a little increased by the presence of thirteen hundred poor children of the charity and Sunday schools. When the hero of the day appeared in the midst of the throng, a rush took place, which had well nigh made him the victim of the gratulatory impulse. I have heard a person who was present, say, that the sudden pressure was tremendous, and but for the activity of some county gentlemen, the warrior who had escaped from the balls of the French, would have been overwhelmed by the multitude of fervent admirers who crowded to get a glance of his person or shake him by the hand.

But testimonies of gratitude were not confined to his own county and its chief town. The capital of the empire, and various large places determined to do honour to his merits. I saw him receive his sword voted by the corporation of London, from the hands of the venerable chamberlain;² and such was the impression made by his presence, that for an instant the fame of his many victories seemed eclipsed, by admiration of the singular modesty and affability of his deportment. When

¹ The freedom of the borough in a gold box; also a silver tureen and stand from the Draper's Company.

² The much-respected Mr. Clarke.

the gentleman who presented him the sword voted him by a large provincial town, observed, that it was of a temper that would not fail him, he replied, "Trust it to me, Sir, and I will not disgrace it." And soon did he amply prove, if indeed the past had not been a sufficient assurance, that his words had meaning; for after having narrowly escaped, by the peaceful termination of our negotiations with America, the command of an expedition to the western hemisphere, he was once more called to the continent of Europe, that he might consummate his reputation in the field of Waterloo. At the commencement of this memorable engagement, he was so placed as to be only an anxious observer of the movements of the forces of Napoleon. He was posted with the troops under his command, to the right of the Nivelles road, and gradually brought them to bear on the enemy, as Bonaparte concentrated his left in his attacks on the chateau of Hougomont, till at last the entire body under his command had formed into those impregnable squares, which are so famous in the history of this decisive day. From that time to the end of the engagement, he was in active operation, and at length contributed to the great crisis of the battle, by his masterly assistance in repulsing the last desperate charge ever made by the Imperial Guard, whose final cheer of their boasted Captain was the signal of their own defeat and his irrevocable fall. Lord Hill's horse was shot under him, and the greater part of his staff were either killed, wounded, or dismounted by the fire of the hostile army. He had with him four brothers on this field of victory. They all survived it with honour;¹ but Sir

¹ The names of these four gallant brothers were, Sir Robert Hill, late commander of the Royal Horse Guards Blue. General Clement Hill, also, late commander of the same regiment. Sir Thomas Noel

Robert Hill and Colonel Clement, now General Hill, were severely wounded. A ball passed through the upper part of the right arm of the former and entered his chest, and the latter received a thrust from a sabre through the fleshy part of his thigh, which penetrated the saddle and fixed in the horse's body. Both these distinguished officers were nevertheless spared to their family, their country, and a large circle of friends by whom they are regarded with the highest possible esteem. Sir Richard Hill, however, was permitted to see only the dawn of their day of reputation ; but his brother Rowland did not go to the grave, till he had witnessed the safe and honourable return of his brave nephews, and received from them marks of attention that drew many a tear of joy from his aged eye. Undaunted in the dangers of the battle field, they have proved themselves in retirement well skilled to advance the blessings of peace ; and true indeed were the lines composed in honour of Lord Hill.

Conspiring Chiefs and People join'd
The Iron Crown from GUILT they tore ;
The Lili'd Wreath they then entwin'd,
And Peace her lovely Chaplet wore.
Hail Salopia ! hail thy son ;
For PEACE he fought—and Peace is won.

Amongst the bequests in the will of Sir Richard Hill, was an onyx ring to Lord Sidmouth, of whose manly

Hill, who died at Maidstone in 1834. Lieutenant Edward Hill, of the Blues, who died in 1830. The two first still survive. Colonel Hill, the father of the present Sir Rowland Hill, was the elder brother of Lord Hill, and died in 1814. He raised a regiment of yeomanry in his own county, and was universally beloved. He has also another brother, Sir Francis Hill, who was Secretary of Legation at the Brazils, and is a Knight of the Tower and Sword.

integrity he always entertained the highest admiration. He also left rings to three of his clerical friends, and pecuniary legacies to others who were eminent for their devotion to the Church¹ and the cause of evangelical religion. His family received abundant proofs of his affection, and his servants of the attachment of one of the kindest of masters. No person who could be said to have a claim on his regard, was forgotten. Considerate attention to the feelings of the humblest individuals connected with them in any way, has ever been a distinguished characteristic of the Hills. It obtained for Lord Hill the familiar but honourable appellation of *Father* amongst his soldiers; and to this day the mention of his name to any of the brave fellows who fought under his command, awakens a smile of pleasurable remembrance, or draws forth a grateful testimony. What a lovely trait it also was in the Christian character of Mr. Rowland Hill, has been long known to the world. The truest wealth of possessors of large estates, is the respectful affection of the poor; and no man ever enjoyed a larger share of this comfort than Sir Richard Hill.

His stature was about the middle size, and his whole demeanour that of a highly-refined gentleman. In conversation he abounded with anecdote and ready humour, combined with demonstrations of singular affection for his friends. There was a fervour in his welcome his visitors never forgot; and people of every class felt at ease in his society, while they were impressed with the proper respect due to his situation. At the same time that his house was a favourite resort of the greatest men

¹ Among these were the Rev. R. Pugh, the Rev. J. Hallward, the Rev. James Stillingfleet, who had rings: money was left to Rev. B. Wood, and others well known for piety and diligence.

of his age, he managed at a period when intemperance was much in fashion, to regulate his table and his parties as became his Christian profession. It is no slight credit to him to have attracted the society of the most distinguished persons of his day, without the seemingly indispensable frivolities and amusements of the fashionable world. That he did so is notorious, and the fact plainly indicates that he was no ordinary man. It may be said that the statesmen who received his support, would visit him for the sake of his vote ; but it must be recollected that he was strictly an independent member of Parliament, and that he was not only courted by politicians, but equally so by lawyers, military men, and dignitaries of the Church. Nor was his intercourse with them confined to the formal dinners of the metropolis ; they followed him to his country-seat, and used to say that they liked him even better at Hawkstone than in London, as they had more opportunities of observing his private and domestic virtues. At the same time that he thus moved in the circles appropriate to his fortune and situation, his doors were always open to those humbler associates to whom he was attached by the bonds of Christian regard. Men of piety of every denomination looked upon Sir Richard Hill as a friend. Though devotedly attached to the Church of England, he accepted the office of trustee to the chapel of his brother Rowland, because he thought that it would tend to the furtherance of the gospel in a destitute part of London. Yet he stipulated that the doctrines taught there should be in accordance with our thirty-nine Articles, and that the Church prayers should be always read. In those days the pious seemed to have but one object ; and there are many who yet remember the happy meetings of men of various shades of opinion, for the sake of promoting it.

The only banner unfurled in these assemblies was love, and they separated in the spirit of peace and prayer.

Sir Richard Hill was taken away before the unhappy hour arrived when discord rent the celestial ensign, and unfurled the flag of division. Yet thanks be to God, there are numerous indications of solid good, and many signs of the increase of true piety. The Church of England is awaking to her duty, and is determined to extend her borders. Herein, under Providence, is our hope as a nation; and our best prospect of ensuring our own security and honour, is in our becoming a blessing to our colonies, and to the whole earth. No age in the history of mankind can be likened to the present. It is a day of wonders; it is also one of confusion. But it is only the confusion of the unshapen materials, which are about to be hewn into suitable forms for the erection of the sanctuary of heaven, the tabernacle of the Lord which shall ere long be with men. Still let us remember that every stone that is wrongly fashioned must be cast away. The workmen must labour with knowledge and discretion; every stroke of the axe and the hammer must be well considered; and above all, we must take heed not to turn the instruments which Providence has placed in our hands for his glory, into weapons of offensive warfare with each other. The only safeguard is the genuine spirit of love, which

—— blooms and blossoms both in sun and shade,
Doth, like a bay in winter, never fade :
It loveth all, and yet suspecteth none,
Is provident, yet seeketh not her own :
'Tis rare itself, yet maketh all things common,
And is judicious, yet judgeth no man.

Quarles.

CHAPTER XXII.

MANNER OF SIR RICHARD HILL. REVIEW OF THE CHANGE EFFECTED IN HIM BY RELIGION. HIS LETTER TO A FRIEND UNDER TERRORS. HIS MEMORANDA OF THE DEATHS OF PIOUS INDIVIDUALS. ACCOUNT OF SHIPMAN, ONE OF THE STUDENTS EXPELLED FROM OXFORD IN 1768. WRITINGS OF SIR RICHARD HILL. "PRESENT FOR YOUR NEIGHBOUR," AND "DEEP THINGS OF GOD." HYMN. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

SIR RICHARD HILL'S MANNER.

It was constantly remarked by the inferiors of Sir Richard Hill, that he was "one of the pleasantest men to speak to in the world;"¹ yet the same affability which rendered him so much respected by those below him, made his society to be exceedingly courted by the higher classes. His gentlemanlike, easy air, the beaming of his quick eye, and the extreme frankness of manner, upon which was engrafted a long-tried integrity of principle, had justly caused him to be universally beloved. He came, soon after his conversion, to the conclusion that real religion is not a system of gloom or moroseness. In a very early letter to a worldly acquaintance, he re-

¹ I lately mentioned his name to a London tradesman with whom he used to deal. He made this very observation.

marked, "That there has been a great change wrought in me, I hope I have no reason to doubt;" but, said he, "to keep an even cheerfulness in company is what I always endeavour to do, and if my conversation appears less lively than formerly, I hope it is owing to my having thrown out that part of it which consisted of jests and satirical remarks upon others." He was brought to an experimental knowledge of the power of the grace of God by severe and trying means, but he always reflected upon them with humble thankfulness, being convinced that he was dealt with in the manner most suitable to his case. Still he had too much wisdom to imagine that the progress of religion was the same in all men, or to look slightly upon Christians who had been the subjects of a gentler agency of the same Spirit. "I do not mean," he observed in writing to a friend, "to insinuate that it is necessary to salvation, that the same work should be carried on upon every renewed soul that has been upon mine; for though many are converted partly in the manner in which it has pleased the Lord to deal with me, yet some souls may be drawn entirely by love, and others by the more gentle operations of divine grace. However, those who have never experienced anything of the kind, certainly ought not to limit the power of the Almighty, and cry out '*enthusiasm*,' especially as by so doing they speak in flat contradiction to experience and the word of God. Yet no wonder that in these days, wherein, according to our blessed Lord's prophecy, iniquity doth abound, and the love of many is waxed cold, no wonder, I say, that almost every thing that is serious is turned into ridicule." In the same letter, while he allowed that souls are brought to God by a variety of means, and deprecated the ridicule of the world, he thus defended the change that divine grace had produced in

his own deportment. "Let any man cast his eyes back upon the primitive ages of the Church, and see how wide a difference there is between the first followers of the holy Jesus, and the generality of our modern professors of Christianity. Alas ! is it not a truth as undeniable as melancholy, that if a person goes to church on Sundays, and there huddles over our glorious Litany like a parrot, receives the sacrament about three or four times a year, and abstains from the commission of all notorious sins, that such a one is now looked upon as of the highest class of Christians ? But how wide is this religion from that obedience the gospel requires ! Indeed I am inclined to think that our good forefathers would hardly have admitted such modern saints to their communion, without making them go through a severe penance in sackcloth and ashes at the church door, to beg the prayers of the people. What I have said,¹ my dear friend, I thought necessary, in order to account for whatever alteration may be observable in my behaviour ; and as the all-wise God, who certainly knows what is best for us, and by what means to accomplish his ends, has brought about this change in me, I trust that the suddenness of it will not make it the less effectual, and shall always endeavour to be mindful of the words of the Apostle, ' Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.' I hope I shall never be ashamed to declare the mercies God has bestowed upon me ; and I have a better opinion of him to whom I write, than to suppose he will esteem me the less for anything there is in this letter, from his sincere and affectionate friend, R. H." That the whole tenor of Sir Richard Hill's life was, by

¹ In the first part of this letter he gave an account to his friend of his conversion, similar to the narrative I have inserted in the beginning of this volume.

the assistance of God, in unison with this resolution made soon after his conversion, has been, I trust, completely demonstrated in my narrative.

The agonies of mind he suffered in his early convictions, and by which he was at first almost overwhelmed, were not only made the means of disrobing him of his self-righteousness and bringing him to a full reliance on that of his Redeemer, but they also enabled him to administer consolation to those who were similarly circumstanced. How anxious he was to confer the benefit of his experience upon others will appear in a most admirable letter he addressed to one under terrors.

MY VERY DEAR SIR,

You will perhaps be surprised if I tell you that though your last was full of complaints, yet it gave me the sincerest pleasure. Oh, Sir, how plainly do I see (though you cannot as yet see it yourself) that the Lord is carrying on an effectual work upon your soul. How exactly does your experience answer to that of numbers, who, I have the greatest reason to believe, are made the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. You complain of the hardness of your heart, that you cannot believe and cannot repent. These complaints are music to the ears of your heavenly Father, who is now convincing you of your lost undone estate by nature and practice, and teaching you to set a full value on the undertaking of his dear Son, who calls unto him all that labour with doubts and fears, and are weary and heavy-laden with the guilt and burden of sin, and who came on purpose to seek and to save that which was lost. You say you cannot repent. If you could of yourself, why is Christ said to be exalted as a Prince

and a Saviour to give repentance to his people? And why does our Church teach us to pray to Him to grant us true repentance, and his Holy Spirit? You say also that you cannot believe. Blessed be God for shewing you this, since the first step to true faith is to be convinced of unbelief. You now know experimentally that the sweet flower of faith grows not on the stock of corrupt nature, but that it is, as the Scripture declares, the gift and work of God, from whom in humble constant prayer it must be sought for. How different now, my dear Sir, are your sentiments of things from what they once were; how different from those of the unawakened world! Ask a dead, formal professor, if he hath faith, and he will perhaps be angry at the question, and tell you confidently that he always believed in Christ. Ask him if he was ever weary and heavy laden, and if he ever found the burden of his sins to be grievous and intolerable (according to the words in our Communion service, which perhaps he himself hath often repeated with his lips); ask him this, I say, and he will very probably tell you that he thanks God he never did anything so bad as to make his conscience uneasy: so ignorant is he both of his own state, and the spirituality of God's law. Now how comes it to pass that there is such a change in you from the world about you? Why, for this plain reason; because Christ hath chosen you out of the world. Ah, my dear Sir, did you know what terrors and sharp soul-distressing conflicts, what strange thoughts, what hardness of heart and mourning because I could not mourn, it pleased the Lord for some years to suffer me to be exercised with, before I was set free by Christ, you would not think your own state so desperate, but would see the loving hand of God in all his dealings with you. But I know by experience, that it

is beyond human persuasion to make you believe in your present dark uncomfortable state, that the Lord has thoughts of mercy to you, and is even now your reconciled Father in Christ. No, nothing but the Holy Ghost can persuade you of this, who will do it in his own good time. However, I mention these things, hoping they may be the means of supporting your soul till God shall lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and accomplish in you the work of faith with power; which, till he has done, you have his gracious promise that neither the world, death, nor hell shall be able to pluck you out of his hand. Say then with the blessed Psalmist, ‘Why art thou so heavy, O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? O put thy trust in God, who is yet the help of thy countenance and thy God. I said in my haste, I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes, nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my prayer. O tarry thou the Lord’s leisure; be strong and he shall stablish thy heart.’ But the guilt of sin is not what alone distresses you; the power of it is as a sore burden, too heavy for you to bear. You complain of frequent backslidings, wanderings, and revoltings from God; and this, perhaps, notwithstanding your repeated vows and resolutions to the contrary. And do not you think, my dear Christian friend, that these complaints are the language of all God’s people? Believe it they are, and read for your comfort what heavy conflicts between flesh and spirit, between the law in his members and the law in his mind, were maintained even in St. Paul himself.¹ And sure I am that whoever knows anything of the plague of his own heart, must cry out with that Apostle, ‘O wretched man that I am, who

¹ Rom. vii. 7 to the end.

shall deliver me from the body of this death !' But are these struggles with sin a proof that a person has no true grace ? Quite the contrary. They plainly shew that he is born of God, and that the new nature is striving for the victory over the old one, which is sure to fight hard to gain the upper hand, and to give the soul many a severe blow before it will in any considerable degree own itself conquered. Even the most advanced Christians have great reason to mourn over their corruptions, to lament that nature which is so continually fighting against grace, and brings them into captivity to the law of sin. Be not therefore discouraged ; you are fighting that good fight of faith, which every true believer from the creation of the world to this present moment has been fighting before you ; and you have the same Captain of your salvation, and the same promises on your side, that in the end you shall be more than conqueror through him who hath loved you. Look at the world around you ! You do not see them complaining of their sins and corruptions ; and the reason is, because they are led captive by Satan at his will. They know not their disease, much less their remedy. They are under the dominion of sin, and though slaves to their corruptions, yet they hug their chains. But is this the case with you ? Oh no, blessed be God's free grace, it is not. You see yourself lost and undone by nature ; you see that in you dwelleth no good thing, and you find in you a principle of grace which once you never had, fighting against that natural principle of corruption which is in you and in every child of Adam ; and this as clearly manifests you to be quickened by the Spirit of God, as, if we were to see a man fight a battle, we must know that he was alive and not dead. Therefore every one of the complaints you make against yourself, are to me

the surest evidences that God is carrying on an effectual work of grace upon your soul, and teaching you many things by experience which otherwise you never could receive. For instance, suppose any one should now attempt to persuade you that there was no such thing as original sin, and that man has in himself the will and power of turning to God, could not you say from your own experience that you feel your whole nature to be depraved, and that without God's special grace, you have no power of yourself to help yourself. Suppose again any one should go about to persuade you that we are saved by our own works, and not by Christ alone, could you not say from the bottom of your soul, that you have no righteousness of your own in which you could stand before an holy, pure, sin-hating God ; and that if it were not for the righteousness of Christ imputed to you by faith, you must for ever despair of acceptance? What if any one was to endeavour to make you believe that there was no need of the influence of God's Spirit, would you not see clearly that without this good Spirit, you must be utterly undone ; that he must enlighten the eyes of your understanding, apply Christ to your soul, comfort your wounded conscience, soften your heart and sanctify your nature, or else you must for ever remain blind, comfortless, and unholy? It is no wonder that the natural man opposes these truths, because as St. Paul observes, he receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned ; and indeed we may as well pretend to talk to a blind man about colours, as to unawakened souls about the inward workings of the Holy Ghost upon the heart. But surely such persons as speak against a Trinity in Unity, original sin, free grace, justification by

faith alone, and the necessity of the divine operations of the Spirit, ought to be ashamed to call themselves members of the Church of England, when that Church in her Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, so constantly inculcates these doctrines and no other. Yet some such persons, I understand by my brother, have been set on by Satan to shake you from your stedfastness. All I shall say, is, may the Lord forgive them, and grant them to experience those divine truths they now make so light of. I shall now offer a word or two of direction suited to your case and then conclude.

1. Be diligent in prayer and reading the word ; and however dead, cold, and hard you may find your heart, go on praying, and my soul for yours, you shall in no wise be cast out.

2. Strive earnestly against sin, especially your favourite sin ; but take care you do not strive in your own strength. The reason why poor souls, especially at their first awakenings, are so often baffled, is because, like Peter, they are too presumptuous in making their resolutions. Cast yourself, then, upon the Lord Jesus, and beg him to accomplish these promises in you—" My grace is sufficient for thee." " Sin shall not have dominion over you."

3. Take care how you mention your soul-conflicts to carnal people, for they will not, cannot understand you, and therefore will think you mad.

4. Beware of self-righteousness, and looking for any gracious qualifications in yourself to recommend you to God's favour. Remember that it is only in his beloved Son that God is well pleased, and that be you ever so sinful, ever so corrupt, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin ; that he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him.

Lastly. Remember for your comfort that weak faith (yea so weak that the person who has it may think he has no faith at all) receives the justifying righteousness of Christ as well as the strongest faith ; consequently weak faith may be true faith. And now, with my sincere prayers that the Lord may bless the contents of this letter, as well as the enclosed tract, to your soul, I conclude,

My very dear Sir,

Yours most affectionately

In the best of bonds,

RICHARD HILL.

Seldom, I think, has a more valuable letter than this, proceeded from the pen of any Christian.

In the course of this work I have made several allusions to the memoranda of Sir Richard Hill. In these he was in the habit of registering the deaths of persons, whose eminent zeal and piety had attracted his attention or obtained his friendship. A few extracts from them will be interesting as shewing the feelings of his own mind, and as memorials of the good men to whose exertions we owe, under Providence, many of the blessings we enjoy in this day.

“ December 25, 1758. About four o'clock in the afternoon, that burning and shining light the Rev. James Hervey, Rector of Weston Favel in Northamptonshire, resigned his meek soul into the hands of his Redeemer. A little before he died, he said, “ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

“ April 8, 1761. That faithful labourer in the vineyard of our blessed Lord, the Rev. Mr. Griffith Jones, went to glory, full of piety and full of days, being in the seventy-seventh year of his age. It may be truly said

of him that few lives were more heavenly and useful, few deaths more triumphant. He was frequently styled the Welch Apostle."

" Sunday, July 19, 1761. The Rev. Mr. Samuel Walker of Truro, in Cornwall, entered upon his Sabbath of eternal rest. The Thursday before he expired, he spoke nearly these words, " I have been on the wings of the Cherubim ; heaven has in a manner been opened to me ; I shall be there soon."

" June 6, 1762. The Rev. Mr. Thomas Jones, chaplain of St. Saviour's, Southwark, exchanged this mortal life for an immortal crown. In a letter I received from the Rev. Mr. Romaine upon the occasion, he thus writes concerning him : ' Sunday morning, this city¹ received a most heavy stroke from the hand of God. That dear minister of the Lord, Mr. Jones, was taken from us. He lay seven days ill of a fever in great peace of mind. His faith was sorely attacked, but it held out ; and the two last days of his life he was supported in a most wonderful manner, rejoicing in the Lord his God, and waiting with a hope full of glory and immortality for his dissolution, which the Lord granted on Sunday morning at two o'clock. O that our latter ends may be like his ! My dear Sir, pray for me ; this is a great shock to me. I am now alone, as I first set out ; not one minister in any parish church to countenance me. Thank God, I have One with me, whose favour is better than life. On Him I depend. He never failed me yet. May He be your Saviour and my Saviour, in life and in death.' "

" Oct. 25, 1767. I received the news of my dear friend Sir Charles Hotham's² being gone to his everlasting rest. I think I never knew any one whose heart

¹ London.

² He has been alluded to in a previous part of this volume.

seemed more devoted to God than his was. He had a great estate which he employed in eminent works of charity to the souls and bodies of his fellow-creatures, and particularly to those of the household of faith, so that his loss to the Church of Christ is very great ; but God will either raise up others in his stead, or will convince his people that he can carry on his work without earthly helps. Lord, prepare me also for the important hour."

"From the St. James's Chronicle, November 8, 1770. Extract of a letter from Boston by Captain Jacobson, dated Oct. 3, 1770. 'The vessel being detained by contrary winds, gives me an opportunity to acquaint you with the melancholy account of the sudden death of that eminent servant of Jesus Christ, the Rev. Mr. George Whitfield. He took his flight to the regions of bliss last Sabbath day morning, September 30, at six o'clock. His transition in the moment of dissolution, was calm and tranquil. After being about a month with us in Boston and its vicinity, and preaching every day, he went to the eastward to Old York, preached on Thursday to the people there, proceeded that evening to Portsmouth and preached on Friday to them. Saturday morning, he set out from Portsmouth for Boston, but was stopped that day, and was importuned by numbers to preach on his way to Newbury, where he had engaged to preach the next morning. The house not being big enough to contain them, he preached to them in the open fields ; but so exhausted his strength, having been very infirm for some weeks past, that when he came to Newbury, he was so weak that he could not get out of the boat without the aid of two men. But in the course of that evening he recovered his spirits, and appeared with peculiar cheerfulness, went to his chamber at nine

o'clock—his fixed time which no company could divert him from—[and] slept rather better than he had for some weeks before. At four o'clock of the Sabbath day morning, he rose and went to his closet, and his companion observed he was unusually long in private. He left his closet and returned to his companion, laid himself on the bed for about ten minutes, then went on his knees and prayed most fervently that, if it might be consistent with the divine will, he might that day finish his Master's work. After this last intercourse with heaven in the body, he desired his man to call Mr. Parsons, a clergyman, at whose house he died, and in a minute after that, before Mr. Parsons could reach him, he closed his eyes on this world without even a sigh or a groan, and commenced a Sabbath of everlasting rest."

"On Thursday the 31st Oct. 1771, Mr. Joseph Shipman, who was one of the six students who were expelled the University of Oxford for the testimony of Jesus, died triumphant in the Lord. His friends first designed him for the Church, but he being a very profligate youth, could not bear the thoughts of going into orders. He was then apprenticed to a linen-draper in Wolverhampton, where he soon became a proverb for all sorts of wickedness. An acquaintance of his during this period, persuaded him to hear the Rev. Mr. Fletcher of Madely. He was struck by the Lord under the sermon, and declared himself as openly for the cause of Christ, as he had done before for the cause of Satan. His relations were now more alarmed and displeased than when he was running into all excess of riot. Nothing now would satisfy him but the ministry."

What follows is a copy of a letter from his brother, of whose conversion he was made the instrument, soon after his decease.

“ Ah ! my dear Sir, the desire of my eyes, the delight of my soul, my darling, my only brother is gone. That dear body I have often clasped in my arms with ineffable delight is now in the earth, there to be devoured by reptiles. It must be so ; it is the decree of heaven, ‘ Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.’ Father, thy will be done. Blessed be God, I did commit his body to the ground in *sure and certain hope* of the resurrection to eternal life. But yet my soul is exceeding cast down ; I feel a loss I cannot express ; he was a very valuable brother ; he was a spiritual guide and counselor, a faithful monitor and reprover to me. I must now bid farewell to his dear, judicious, and heart-searching letters, his honest sermons, and his affecting discourse. Farewell, farewell, thou dear saint ! O God, grant it may not be an eternal farewell ! But let me, according to your desire, give you an account of my dear Joseph. You could not put me on a more pleasing employ ; I love to tell of him and record all his dear sayings ; and though it opens the sluices of affection afresh, yet the sorrow is pleasing, and perhaps I indulge it too much. I will begin from the early part of his life. And O thou Divine Spirit, suffer me not to say anything merely to exalt my brother, but let it all tend to the praise and glory of thy rich and sovereign grace. My father put him, as soon as capable, to a gentleman in Upton, eminent for his literary abilities, designing him for the University ; but when he came of the age of fifteen, having no sense of religion, he could not bear the thought of being *a parson*, and therefore desired to be put to trade. A draper’s he chose, and my father apprenticed him to one in Wolverhampton for five years. Here, in a very short time, he commenced a rake of the first rate, and a ringleader in all kind of wickedness, a notorious drunk-

ard, &c. &c. In short, he rendered himself so infamous and detestable, that people abhorred him, and were afraid to have their children become his acquaintance; and yet, then, even then, (stand, O my soul, and adore) when in the height of wickedness and the high road to hell, God had mercy on him, and stopped the rebel and bid him live. The means he employed were these. A young lady of Wolverhampton, who had a superior fortune to my brother, was lately brought home to God, and invited him, July 7, 1765, to go to hear the Rev. Mr. Fletcher. He, hoping thereby to win her affections and get possession of her and her money, those vile motives made him accept the offer. Mr. F. preached from Eph. v. 14. The word came with astonishing power to my brother's heart. It made him tremble and see himself in a horrid light. So deeply was it enstamped upon his mind, that three days afterwards he wrote most of it down. It pleased God to work by these impressions an effectual change in his heart. Upon his entrance into the world of new creatures, how zealous was he: every night was employed in writing to his wicked companions and friends, and every day in talking of the wondrous things God had done for his soul. Letter after letter flew to Upton, and he crammed us with so much religion that we began to detest him. At this time the dear creature met with much persecution from us, his friends, &c. The time of the expiration of his apprenticeship drew near, and nothing would satisfy him but the ministry. My dear father about now died, and we were all left in an awful situation. The remainder of us opposed his being a *parson* with all our might, and with much difficulty got him to engage with a draper in Birmingham; but nothing could stop his desire after the conversion of souls. Frequently he was used to go out,

and endeavour to speak to them. One Lord's day he happened to be at West Bromwich, and Mr. Coughland preached. By some means he got intelligence, that Mr. Coughland would take young men desirous of entering the ministry, with him to some place abroad. Well, he made application, and it was agreed on for his embarking, and over he came to Upton to take a final leave. We found him absolutely determined to go. We all shook hands and parted; and I was going to mount my horse for market, when a thought came into my head of offering him to go to Oxford University. I came in and made it; he accepted it, and put by his intended voyage. We put him under the tuition of a serious clergyman for some time, and he entered the University one term, and was expelled the next. I made use of this severe act to turn his thoughts from the ministry, and tried by all the arguments I was master of, to get him in trade again; and that not availing, I used threats, and told him the trustees and I were resolved he should never have one shilling in money; but it all did not signify. Lady Huntingdon wrote him a letter of consolation at this time. He made his case known to her, and she very kindly invited him to Tunbridge; and off he was going without sixpence in his pocket. [God] would not suffer me to continue my cruelty to him. I had no rest, and I went to Eversham just before he set off, and gave him cash, &c. My brother continued with my lady about a year and a half, and preached at Brighthelmstone, Tunbridge, and in various parts of Wales; but something happened that he separated from her, and went to Mr. Whitfield's people at Bristol, &c. His zeal and earnestness in preaching carried him beyond his natural strength, insomuch that he generally was used to knock himself up in about four or six months. Then he would

come home to be nursed, and so set off again. Great, yea, very great, was his love to souls; never was he pleased but when in the work, and had his strength been equal to his will, he never would have ceased a day from publishing the glad tidings to poor, lost, and perishing sinners. At Harford, April 1, 1770, he burst a blood-vessel, occasioned by preaching the day before with too much energy, on the resurrection of Christ in the morning, and saints and sinners in the afternoon, which brought on the consumption of which he died. The vast quantity of blood he then expended brought him to death's door, and it was with much difficulty we got him thence. At this time his soul was very lively, and he employed what little time he could in writing farewells to the societies, &c. He had been at home but five weeks when you and Mr. Rowland Hill came and took him from us. Soon after his arrival in Bristol, I received a sweet letter, in which he said, 'I would to God I could describe to you, the tenth part of that unspeakable delight and comfort I find in God since I have been here. Surely God heareth the prayers and tears of my dear Bristol friends. I feel a blessed abasement of soul at the Redeemer's feet. I tell him how vile I have been; I enlarge upon my barrenness and my ingratitude, and lie as low at his feet as possible. But he stretches out the golden sceptre of peace; he tells me the wonders of his love, and fills my soul, and at times almost overpowers my weak body with his rich consolations. Oh! brother, my heart even now panteth after God; I long to behold his glory and see him face to face.' A deal more such blessed experience is in the letter. These very strong consolations did not last long. In another letter he told me 'God has abridged my comforts greatly, but continues my con-

fidence unshaken.' After five weeks stay at Bristol, and we had got him home, the [Lord] seemed to withdraw his sensible presence from his soul, and thus he was left to linger through many a wearisome hour, with only now and then a rich consolation, for thirteen weeks; but still through all, a firm, fixed, unwavering faith was preserved, with much confidence in God. In this state he was led to see and feel himself the chiefest of sinners. At the end of the above time, and about fourteen days before his death, he began to spit blood, and everything seemed to intimate that another vessel was broken. It came up moderately for several days, but on a sudden a cough seized him, and in a moment the blood poured up through his mouth and nose so astonishingly, that we expected every minute to be his last. It put his body in violent tremblings, cold sweats, &c., and his mind in the utmost confusion, so that he cried out, 'Surely I am like a wild bull in a net;' but in a short time the tremblings left his body, the blood a little subsided, and his soul was all calm and serene, but still every mouthful of blood we expected would suffocate him. The very affecting scene made us weep, but at intervals he said, 'Do not cry; God is with me, God is with me, I am happy, I am happy, I am upon the sure foundation, I am going to heaven.' He voided near two quarts of blood before it ceased, and the Lord was pleased to give him a night beyond our expectation. In the morning, how did the dear creature pine and moan to think he was come back into the world again. The blood still continuing to come up in little quantities, made him conclude and say, 'I believe I shall be strangled in my own blood; but never mind, for all will be well if I am.' On Thursday, the 31st of October, the awful period came. We had helped him up in the bed for dinner,

and asked him how he was, to which he answered, '*brave*,' when in an instant the blood began in a fearful manner to run up through his mouth, &c., in such amazing quantities as choked him in a few minutes, having only just time to lift up his dear hands and eyes to heaven."

"Character of my dear friend, the late Rev. Mr. Talbot, Rector of St. Giles's, in Reading. From the Reading paper. 'He was a man remarkable for the practice of every virtue. No one ever attended more diligently to the duties of his public and private stations. Besides performing the common offices of the Sabbath, he established a weekly lecture, which was well attended. He was a moderate Calvinist, and generally preached extempore to crowded congregations, who heard him with exquisite pleasure. His doctrine was truly evangelical. His public exhortations were seconded by private admonition, and both enforced by the purity of his example: nor was he more singular for the attention he paid to the spiritual, than to the temporal wants of mankind. Philanthropy was the guide of his steps, and the main-spring of all his actions. He never failed to wipe away the tear from the eye of the unhappy, nor to banish want from the dwellings of the poor who came under his cognizance. He delighted in visiting the abodes of the wretched, that he might be the means of making them happy. His income, which was large, was spent in such benevolent actions. He fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and visited the sick, in the last of which kind offices he caught a fever, which deprived society of a very valuable member, and Reading of its best friend."

These records of the departed were kept by Sir Rich-

ard Hill in the early part of his religious course, with a view of stimulating himself to press forward towards the prize they had obtained. He was also, throughout his whole life, eminently distinguished by that invariable accompaniment of genuine piety, love of the brethren, which he manifested towards them in perpetual acts of the highest benevolence.

In noticing the writings of Sir Richard Hill, it will not be necessary to review all his various pamphlets, the more especially as the most striking have already been abundantly referred to. His use of the pen was incessant, and he wrote always with extreme facility, frequently with great power and piety; but sometimes without sufficient caution. Almost all the numerous works he was continually sending to the press, displayed considerable reading, illustrated by great originality of thought; and had he carefully corrected what he threw off with spirit and rapidity, he would have been a very powerful writer. As it was, whatever he published attracted much attention, and was often instrumental of good, though he frequently adopted a mode of argument it was impossible to justify. Unless, however, we place ourselves in imagination amidst the scenes it was his lot to witness and deplore, we cannot form any fair judgment or make proper allowances for what in these days would be much less excusable. He saw wickedness equally triumphant in every grade of society; and as soon as it pleased God to convince him of the evil of sin, all his faculties were engaged in exhibiting its dangers and in endeavouring to correct it. Religion had shewn him the true nature of the ungodly pursuits of mankind, and zeal for the sacred cause of truth urged him to an unqualified declaration of his own views, and an uncompromising denunciation of the pomps, the

vanities, the pleasures of a sinful age. All these he attacked in every possible way. Few persons have exceeded him in the graphic power of depicting the various shapes which error assumed, whether of vice, or hypocrisy, or false doctrine, or formality. His character of Lucinda is a remarkable example of his ability in this respect ; but it would have been better if some strokes had been erased from this ingenious portraiture, before it was exhibited to the world. Were he now alive, he would most willingly acquiesce in these remarks ; for never was any author more ready to confess a mistake the instant he perceived it, and the feeling with which he endeavoured to heal any wound inadvertently made by him, proved that he was influenced by a genuine spirit of humility and love.

There are two of his religious works that have been deservedly held in very high esteem—his *Present for your Neighbour*, and his *Deep Things of God*. The latter has had a most extensive circulation, and still continues its merited reputation. It concludes with the following hymn, “containing his own experience, and composed one night when he could not sleep.”

My guilty soul, how long beset
With terrors all around,
Whilst law and justice claimed their debt,
But I no payment found.

In works and duties long I tried
Some inward peace to find :
The more I strove, the more I cried
Ah ! much is left behind.

My weary soul the task renewed,
And fain the prize would win ;
But when my righteous deeds I viewed,
I found each deed was sin.

Now Sinai's thunders louder roll,
And sense proclaimed me lost ;
Distracting anguish seized my soul,
And hope gave up the ghost.

At length I heard the gospel sound ;
O joyful sound to me !
' Jehovah just may still be found,
And set th' ungodly free.'

That precious blood which faith applies,
In spite of hell and sin,
My guilty conscience pacifies,
And spreads sweet peace within.

My spotless Saviour lived for me ;
On him my sins were laid :
And whilst I view him rise, I see
Each mite was fully paid.

Ascended now to God on high,
Above th' ethereal skies,
He bids me boldly to draw nigh,
And all my wants supplies.

Though base backslidings me reprove,
He those backslidings heals ;
Displays his never-changing love,
And all his grace reveals.

Say, dearest Shepherd, tell me why
To me this wondrous love ;
That such a poor lost sheep as I
Such matchless grace should prove.

Reasons I seek, but seek in vain,
For none I e'er shall know ;
Then seek no more, since this is plain,
That God would have it so.

There is scarcely to be found in any book a more enlarged acquaintance with the workings of real religion

than in the *Deep Things of God*, nor a more forcible exposure of imaginary piety. It will be found an excellent companion for Wilberforce's *Practical Christianity*; and it is not a little remarkable that two such works should have been produced by the two most zealous members of Parliament in the days of our revival. The solid piety of each of these authors is so exhibited in their respective volumes, that there can be no shadow of ground for any idea that their exertions were the result of a visionary or unsettled habit of thinking, as scoffers would have the world suppose.

I have now completed my delineation of the character of Sir Richard Hill, and have exhibited him in the various important situations which he filled, in times of extraordinary difficulty and interest. Nearly thirty-one years have elapsed since his death, and it may fairly be questioned if this nation has seen a more devoted character since he was removed from it. His time, his fortune, his talents, his influence, were all consecrated to the service of religion; and if at any time a momentary flush of indignation vented itself too strongly, or a rising witticism escaped him that would have been better repressed, he was of all men the readiest to acknowledge these infirmities, and to make amends for them. He was a loyal subject to his sovereign, a real friend to his country, an honest representative of his constituents, and a zealous assertor of the doctrines of the Church of England against Popery on one side, and apathy on the other. "He was a man of great business and great resort—*semper aliquis in Cydonis domo*"¹—and all departed, of whatever station in society, with equal satisfaction at having paid him a visit. His religious principles brought

¹ Jer. Taylor of the Lord Primate.

constantly before the public in his speeches and writings, did not evaporate in the heat of these excitements, but were diffused through the periodical occupations of each day. They were a source of comfort to his domestics, and made a blessing to his tenantry, at the same time that they in some degree influenced all orders of men in every part of the kingdom. A grateful country has acknowledged the eminent services of the heroes of the family which bears his name. The inheritors of his estates are followers of the example of his enlightened philanthropy. A willing public will now afford to his memory that deserved reputation which he was ever ready to sacrifice to the honour of God and the interests of religion.

THE END.

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